

RIP VAN SCOTLAND
by
WILLIAM BELL



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“ He either fears his fate too much,
Or his deserts are small,
Who dares not put it to the touch,
To gain or lose it all.”

(MONTROSE)



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PREFACE

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*Turville Heath,
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CHAPTER ONE

“But pith an’ power, till my last hour,
I’ll make this declaration;
We’re bought and sold for English gold—
Such a parcel of rogues in a nation.”
(BURNS)

IT has been well said that only that which a people *alone* can do better than anyone else in the world, makes that people important for the time being. In face of the Scottish people’s menial position to-day as the Cinderella of England, one is impelled to pose the question as to what the Scots alone can do better than any other race on earth. Have they a future culturally in the comity of nations? Has the inherent Scottish genius ever existed as a national entity? In what form has that genius found expression in the past?

If it be asserted that the Scottish genius has never yet been given expression in any

single department of thought-activity, the united chorus of tinsel-patriots in the Burns' and Caledonian Clubs would hiccup their thick denials. They would point to Burns, and warm their second-hand patriotism at the fire of his muse. In the artificial atmosphere of a public dinner they would readily forget that the Poetic Genius of Scotland was rated so low by the supercilious London parliament that it promoted Burns to the congenial task of gauging beer-barrels. He died a pauper amongst the ancestors of those who now celebrate him annually with their stomachs, and are loudest in their praise of the everlasting Scottish Spirit while under the temporary influence of those other national spirits—from a bottle.

Having drawn attention to the Ayrshire Bard, those touchy after-dinner lovers of their country would point majestically to the whole field of Scottish literature since Burns' day. Yet that was written in English, with a judicious seasoning of the Doric, about dead Scottish history for living English readers.

When Barrie looked out of his window

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in Thrums it was not Scotland he saw, but Fleet Street. Like the "common Burns-ite"—as Henley called them—Barrie's vision has always been *backward*. His gift lies in deftly cutting a genteel slice out of the past, toasting it to an appetising shade of brown at the family fireside, spreading a seemly layer of home-made butter on the toast, serving it up on a bit of chaste Victorian china, with Mrs. Grundy herself presiding at the tea-tray. Yet the Scottish people are in a deeper English rut than when Barrie first saw them from his kail-yaird at Kirriemuir. He seems to have learnt nothing vital for his country, and has consequently taught her nothing new in his books. What, then, has he done with his talents? He has amused us. But his be-knighted compatriot, Sir Harry Lauder, is also alleged to have amused many. That is certainly better than if he had bored them. Except for his pantomimic phantasy for children of all ages, Barrie's work is as expressly dated as to-day's postmark. He has written of little ministers, of still smaller factions of the congregation, and of what every

woman knows. But what a man wants to know is whether Sir James has ever spent five minutes seriously thinking of the future of his native country, which is in process of being stifled nationally as he himself has suppressed his "Maconochie" in hermetically sealed tins during the whole of his literary career.

Indeed, the ruck of "Scottish" novelists and story-tellers seem to have written in treacle, not in ink. They have been unable to see Scotland for the vegetables in their kailyairds. They have preferred the view from their back-doors across their own cabbage-patch, rather than that from their front windows on their country's future. Sir Walter Scott for inspiration looked backward, like Lot's wife, and was willingly turned into a pillar of baroneted loyalty to England by George IV. Stevenson, too, spent his exiled invalid life in playing the "sedulous ape" with brigands and smugglers; concerning himself mainly with the purity of the English language, and unaware that the future of Caledonia was not in her past.

Ian MacLaren became entangled in his

literary briar-bush because his readers preferred him to grow kail for the present, rather than to propagate the Scottish thistle for posterity. Fiona Macleod lost his way among lone shielings on misty islands, and early discovered that his own future lay in the historical past. Crockett catered specially for that large body of readers whose un-co-ordinated emotions require an astringent. There is just sufficient of the safe "love element" in his books to jog the curiosity of his jaded followers, who thereby are able wistfully to dally on the outside edge of the un-attainable. Undoubtedly his chosen line of writing provides a popular safety-valve through which harmlessly escape the repressed desires of intellectual Peter Pans.

It is usually the "Auld Licht" tallow-dip which our novelists employ to look *backward* into the past: they never attempt to shed a ray of new light on a possible future. A rear light, as well as a headlight, is necessary even on a motor-car. Why, then, must the Scottish people dispense with a headlight on their national literary chariot? Is the prospect looking

backward so satisfying that they take for granted the future of their country lies behind her? Is there no lesson to be learned from Byron, whose poetic frenzy finally expressed itself in laying down his life fighting as a Scot for the independence of—Greece?

Perhaps the Scottish genius is best able to express itself in fighting battles for other peoples. It may be that only as a servant can the Scottish character find an adequate outlet. The universal English belief that the Northerners have little sense of humour may have arisen from the fact that the Scots while “running the Empire” have never realized that they do so only by the grace of their English masters. So inured to their subordinate position have the present generations of Scots become that their relationship to England has passed into a joke with a double meaning. The English show outward amusement at the Aberdonian chestnut about the Scots being the heids o’ depairtments wherever they may penetrate in the Empire. But while the Northerner thus pats himself on the back on account

of his assumed administrative and intellectual superiority, the Southerner secretly remembers the better half of the joke—that he himself is the Master of the battalions of smug servants whom he cleverly employs as Heads of Departments. Thus John Bull continues to rule the roast, as well as the haggis, while his abject subjects beyond the Border mumble in their Bacchanalian slumbers: “Lay the proud usurpers low.” But it is their sentimental hearts only that are stirred, for their pot-valiant patriot’s head remains narcotized the rest of the year.

Scottish subjection to England for over two centuries has evolved a generation of Scots who have no vision of their future except through English eyes. That a people so politically conscious as the Scots should have only the slightest conception of a to-morrow, except under the wing of England, is a phenomenon that is difficult to explain in these days of rampant nationalism. The old Parliament of Scotland never became the centre of Scottish public life in the sense in which the Parliament of England had become the

pivot of English life at least three centuries before the Union of 1707. The abolition of the Edinburgh Parliament in that year has resulted in the Scottish people having no political traditions—in the modern sense of that term—except such as have come to them through Westminster. Being young politically, the Scots therefore take themselves much more seriously in politics than do the English to-day.

The argumentativeness of the Scottish character is indeed one of its national traits. Hair-splitting, whether on religion or on politics, is become almost as national a pastime as golf. To discuss the possibility of Scottish independence is merely set down as day-dreaming; for to mention *The Dream of John Ball* to a sporting plus-foured Scot usually conjures up for him the vision of a golf-championship at St. Andrews. The surge of Celtic emotionalism in his make-up finds its line of least resistance in a verbal contest. This national penchant for dancing the Highland Fling on every point of argument simplified the problem of governing the sister kingdom for the English, especially during the

interminable sectarian squabbles which still cram the pages of Scottish history. The series of reformatations, secessions and disruptions had no sooner been "settled" by heated personal, bloodletting, and legal arguments, than the succeeding generations began all over again in the opposite direction. Presumably, when Union is "settled" on a wholesale scale, they will begin once more to secede, disrupt, and reform through the whole religious declension.

Meanwhile the English will have reduced modern Caledonia to a land fit for foreigners to golf and shoot in. When the last authentic Scot dies, the post-mortem will probably reveal that he failed to survive the "successful" operation for English blood-transfusion. His bones will be laid to a fitful rest in the nearest Episcopalian cemetery. The grave will doubtless be dug by a Polish sexton wielding a Sheffield pick and shovel. The hearse will be a French automobile; the tombstone of Italian marble subscribed for by exiled Anglicized patriots in the Caledonian Clubs of the English Empire. The burial-service

will be conducted by a Roman Catholic priest. A grateful English Parliament will send a Welsh M.P. in kilts as a last mark of respect from the Mother of Parliaments. The obituary notice will be written with the Americanized pen of a publicity expert—the Jewish bailiffs meanwhile being in possession of the slum-tenement of the dear-departed.

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CHAPTER TWO

“ A really great people can never accept a secondary part in the history of Humanity, nor even one of the first, but will have the first part. A nation which loses this belief ceases to be a nation.”

(DOSTOÏEVSKI)

IT was David Hume who observed that the character of a nation is rather the product of popular prejudice than of philosophic insight. This shrewd remark of the eighteenth-century writer is peculiarly applicable to the case of his own countrymen. For the English-speaking world the modern concept of Scottish character is based on the popular prejudices that have accrued since 1707, when the last Scottish Parliament sold the pass for English gold to John Bull. Since the Union of the Parliaments the prestige of the Scottish people has ebbed and flowed like the Solway tides ; and to-day there is every indication that the race is on the

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way to ultimate extinction as a separate nation. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that Scotland is now universally looked upon as a geographical expression, but not seriously as a nation in terms of Dostoïevski's interpretation of that word. Indeed, English eyes see her merely as a remote province on the hinterland beyond the Cheviots ; and " Scotlandshire " would be a not inaccurate label on future maps of England for her most northerly county.

So long have the Rip van Winkles of Scottish blood remained asleep at their posts throughout the far-flung English Empire that they are almost unaware of the provincial condition of their fatherland. For the relation of Master to Servant has been the bond since 1707 between England and Scotlandshire.

If it be true that every nation has its own particular contribution to add to the scheme of things, it may be taken for granted that only under complete self-government can any people fully express its national genius. Since Scotlandshire has been " governed " by a hybrid administration operating from an eccentrically

situated alien capital, it follows that with the passing of time she has been treated more and more as a political province of England. It is inherent in the cosmic system that all forms of centralized government tend ultimately to reduce the several components of a State to a uniform pattern, with little if any consideration for local differences of character.

True it is, of course, that Scotlandshire has sent its quota of M.P.'s to Westminster ever since the Union of Parliaments. But as the Scottish members have necessarily been in a decided minority there, every piece of legislation enacted on behalf of the alleged Scottish nation has been passed only with the sanction of the permanent English and alien majority. Moreover, no measure can become law at Westminster unless at least one hundred members vote in its favour. Hence if all of the seventy-four representatives selected for the Scottish constituencies were to be unanimously in favour of a Bill dealing with a vital Scottish question, they would require the merciful support of English votes to make their will operative. Time and again

have the dominating English members voted down a resolution to which the majority of Scottish M.P.'s were favourable. With the political dice thus loaded against them, the Scottish remnant must always play a losing game with the perennial opposition majority.

The present writer well remembers his first visit to the English House of Commons over twenty years ago. It so happened that the Scottish estimates for the year were discussed that day. On reaching that item on the agenda the House "went into Committee," and, immediately, the bulk of the English members filed out of the chamber. The Scots were left to carry on the "debate" to the almost empty benches. Pious blasts of hot air were evaporated by Unionist and Liberal alike, though mainly with the object of justifying themselves to their distant constituents through the pages of *Hansard* and the Press. Before the Division-bell rang, the English representatives came back to the House. Though they had heard not a single word of the Scottish argument, yet they filed out dutifully to record their

votes against the proposals of those outlandish, freckled, bandy-legged, red-haired, and kilted fanatics who had so inconsiderately disturbed them in the refreshment-rooms and at the card-tables.

Subsequent visits to the House, and wider experience of Westminster politics, eventually taught one that no matter what party is in *office*, it is never in supreme power. For the real Government behind any political administration is High Finance, which sways the destiny of nations like a Colossus astride the world.

To allay the latent suspicions of politicians of all the Parties, Tory to Bolshevik, who have such highly developed faculties for smelling a rat and for detecting the trail of a red herring, the present writer would add that, though he has been a qualified voter in sundry constituencies since long before the late war, yet he has never exercised his "privilege" nor felt it his "duty" to vote. Not because politics is a subject that has no interest for him, but because he recognizes that political plaster for social sores is not the best way of treating the patient. For the sores on

the surface of the body politic are clear evidence to him that there is something wrong with the *circulation* of the weary victim. When the main bloodstream of Credit is retarded artificially by the professional gentlemen who doctor their industrial clientèle, it is as obvious as Ben Nevis that an external application of political ointment and linen does not touch the root of the matter. Indeed, the quantity of linen required has increased with the years of the industrial sufferer; and it is doubtful whether a winding-sheet may yet be wanted.

It is, of course, obvious even to the village idiot that Scotlandshire has "advanced" considerably since 1707 despite de-centralized administration; but it is not so obvious how much farther she might have gone had she had continuous self-government. From a material standpoint the country has become richer; has seen her standard of comfort rise like the rest of civilization during the same period; and her sons have achieved success in every walk of life and in every part of the world. It would have been a conclusive indictment

of the Scottish people if, after the Union, they had lagged behind the times, and been unable to utilize the scientific discoveries and inventions—many of Scottish origin—during the “ great industrial era ” of last century. But the late war was the final chapter of that distinguished epoch which produced our slums as a reminder of the vanity of human wishes. The passing of England’s power as a world-force is already begun, though the process may be a slow one and “ unthinkable ” to all English patriots.

So long as England had no serious competitors in international trade, just so long could she send her manufactures into every corner of the globe. But with the industrialization of Germany in the forty years before 1914 ; and with the advent of the U.S.A. as a formidable rival in the world-markets, England’s almost accidentally fortunate position has rapidly changed for the worse. The first salvo fired in August, 1914, was at the same time the death-knell of the old order of things political and economic in England—nay, in the whole world.

Was it also a coronach for the Scottish people?

That will depend on whether they choose to re-establish their country as a self-governing nation, or to suffer gradual effacement even as a people under the stress of future world-movements.

As England has assimilated to herself the Norse, the Danish, the Saxon and the Norman invaders, so is she almost imperceptibly but certainly transmuting in the crucible of Westminster the sterling metal of the Scottish invaders. If the Scots are willing to lose their identity as a nation, that is their funeral—in the true sense of the phrase—but, in the name of St. Andrew, let them stop hiccupping that “Freedom and whisky gang thegither,” for in Scotlandshire they don’t—in spite of the drunken bardic bravado; unless, of course, the type of cultural perfection for the Scots is that of the Queen in *Alice* who could believe six impossible things before breakfast.

Scottish freedom died in 1707, but the corpse is still unburied. Perhaps the intervention of a miracle may yet see her

restored to life? If this miracle be not performed soon, then a parasitical Westminster Parliament will eventually bury the Scottish nation when it is "as dead as Queen Anne," in whose reign the political conquest of Scotland by England took place. (Was that colloquial expression first used cryptically by our English conquerors to mean "as dead as Scotland," on parallel lines to the mystical toast to the King "over the water" that was drunk by loyal Jacobites?)

The Cock o' the North has already crowed for over two centuries since Scotland almost unwittingly denied her own freedom. If she continue unrepentant for the third century, she will thus automatically commit national suicide in the true Judas tradition.

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CHAPTER THREE

“ Oh, the wooden heads of Scotland !
How beautiful they stand !
A fuddled flock in an English rut,
Round all their pleasant land ! ”
(MR. HE-MAN)

THAT every people has its own distinct type of genius may be postulated and substantiated by history. It is universally recognized, for instance, that the mind-cast of the Englishman results in certain qualities of character which clearly differentiates him from the Scot, the Frenchman, the German, and all other nationals. The factors which have taken part in the process of evolving the “ typical ” Englishman are not to be enumerated like a recipe for making jam. But geographical situation relative to other countries, longitude and latitude, climate, and so on, are some of the ingredients which have gone to the making of the

English character. Whatever be the cause of it, the effect is that the Englishman is "different" from the German, from the American, and even from the Scot, in spite of the spirit of "internationalism" which has apparently existed between England and Scotland for some two or three centuries.

The gift of the English for selecting the right man for the right place is undoubtedly an attribute of their genius for administration. England with almost uncanny insight has never hesitated to use the best human material available. Jew or Gentile ; Irishman or Scot ; Frenchman or Dutchman ; German or Indian, have all been co-opted into the administration of her Empire in a way that might have produced political indigestion in any other nation. Since 1603 she has also found Scotlandshire one of her most satisfactory sources of recruitment for the Army and the Navy. By fulsome praise of the traditional fighting qualities of the Scots, English politicians have subtly added to the national pride of the Northerners in their being "bonnie fechtters."

Has not England built up her great Empire at the point of Scottish bayonets? Have innocent Highland crofters ever hesitated to defend England against an invasion of equally innocent Boer farmers, when Jewish gold and diamonds were at stake? Has there ever been a private scrap anywhere on earth but the Scot has "joined in"? Is there a Crown or a Republic in Europe which has been established without the presence of a kilt? Can there be a spot on the map which bears not the impress of a Scottish brogue? Have not the Scots helped many peoples to become nations? Are not Scotsmen to be found "at the top" in every civilized and uncivilized country in the world?

Neither Norseman or Dane, Roman or Saxon was able to subjugate wholly the Scottish people in open conflict. History bears witness to the fact that Scotland was never conquered by force of arms. It was only by secret intrigue carried on by the heids o' depairtments in the last Edinburgh parliament that Scottish Independence was at last bartered to England.

The world has surely need of a people

that has imprinted its mark on the planet in almost every sphere of action and thought, except self-government. Since 1707 the Scots have skilfully practised the Nelson touch by turning their blind eye to the fact that they are in a subordinate position. The first act of Scotland's tragedy was played in 1603, when the Scottish King automatically succeeded to the English throne. The entr'acte of the ensuing century, under the absentee kings, saw the gradual Anglicizing of the Scottish nobility at the English Court, and of the Edinburgh parliament. The quiverful of arrows, aimed by the far-seeing and appropriately named Fletcher of Saltoun and his few supporters, was, however, useless against those time-serving "Scots" who voted for the Union of the Parliaments; and thus the curtain rang down on the second act in 1707.

The third act is now being played; but so long accustomed to the Westminster Administration have modern Scots become that they are almost unaware of the subserviency of their country. They have complacently purred at the thought that

they have been “running things” for England since 1603; that they have helped to establish the Empire by sword, by ploughshare, and by shepherd’s crook; that a succession of “brilliant” Prime Ministers—pure-bred Scots and otherwise—have occupied the spot-light at the Westminster opera; and that the great world has benefited considerably whenever a Scot has taken his foot from off his native heath. Yet the fact remains that all this reflected glory, in the long run, has been to the detriment of their country. Their attitude has been like that of Nero fiddling while Rome burnt.

It is probably true that in proportion to her population Scotland has sacrificed more of her nationals on the battlefields of the world than any other nation since 1603. Parallel with this artificial addition to her death-roll has been the steady deduction of her emigrants added to the birth-roll of every English colony, dependency, and protectorate. To-day, however, the native population of Scotlandshire is not increasing in its former ratio, but is actually decreasing. At the present rate

of metamorphosis, there will undoubtedly come a time when there will be few Scots in their native land. For England is silently putting her guinea-stamp on Scottish character, Scottish institutions, and Scottish industry. Emigration of nationals, immigration of foreigners, and Anglicization of the population generally can lead only to one result—the disappearance of a people still recognizable as Scottish.

True it is, of course, that the “thrifty” Scot abroad is keeping the Sabbath and everything else he can lay his hands on. True also that only recently the North Pole was discovered to be painted tartan, as was long prophesied. Again, true that the London-Scottish dutifully won the Battle of Jutland for their masters. Still more certain that the chief exports of Aberdeen are granite-setts and jokes about Scotsmen—both to be trodden on by English feet. Indisputable at least that it is nobody’s business but her own if Scotlandshire prefer to adopt the attitude of Uriah Heep, and, on stepping-stones of her dead self, help other nations to rise to higher things.

But what is wrong with the Scot that he should perpetually choose to serve as mid-wife at the birth of other nations? Is it the cosmic destiny of the Scots that they are fitted only for the rôle of international Sairey Gamp? Is the function of dry-nurse the sole part their country is capable of playing in the dramatic repertory of the English Empire? Will the Scot remain content for ever to be the tin-can tied to the tail of the English bull-dog whenever it chooses to rush into another world-fight? Is his spirit of national independence so crushed by the weight of two centuries of subjection that he will always suffer a decentralized parliament of aliens and Anglicized Scots to administer the political affairs of his country? Has the long struggle of the centuries by the Polish people—now a nation—no message for the Scots?

If there breathe a Scot with soul so dead as to believe that his country is not worthy to be trusted with self-government, then he were better buried, for he is already dead intellectually. If there breathe a Scot so decadent as to feel that

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the Scottish people must remain thirled to Westminster until the crack of doom, he would be wise to seek a remedy for his spiritual impotence before it is too late. For if there be no vision of self-government in the minds of Scottish men and women, then the people must perish as a nation, and be completely absorbed by their Southern masters. Any vigorous race which is incapable of self-expression through its own resident parliament deserves to sink to oblivion.

Hewers of wood and drawers of water, a dwindling people which submits to a servile condition cannot possibly bear within itself the seeds of its own liberation. If modern Scots fail to take the initiative towards self-government before long, then the indignant remark of Fletcher of Saltoun would still apply to Scotlandshire. "It is only fit for the slaves who sold it," was his parting dictum before he rode out of Edinburgh on the day which saw the dissolution of the last Scottish parliament.

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CHAPTER FOUR

“ Our lands, our lives, and all are England’s,
And nothing can we call our own but death,
And that small model of the barren earth,
Which serves as paste and cover for our bones.”
(SHAKESPEARE)

A MIDST the vague attempts to cultivate what is called “ internationalism ” it would be useful to determine the signification of this much-abused term. In all subjects there are omnibus words in common use which seem to defy even an approximate definition. In politics, for instance, the term Conservatism has to be elastic enough to comprise the “ die-hard ” Protectionist and the “ moderate ” safe-guarding Free Trader. Yet Liberalism also embraces Free Trade, though many Liberal administrations have never hesitated to impose import duties on sundry commodities. Labour-Socialism, too, has within its ranks

men who are as conservatively minded as Mr. Baldwin ; and the present Socialist Cabinet contains out-and-out advocates of Protection, as well as many convinced Free Traders. Socialism-in-our-Time, Oh, Lord Passfield, is a radically different policy from that of the Webb-footed Fabian-Socialists now in office ; and naturally the Red Flag already shows clear traces of Imperialist blue.

In face of the evidence provided by enthusiastic preachers of the gospel of "internationalism," the word still wanders about the world seeking a satisfactory definition. Supporters of this elusive policy seem, however, to be agreed that anyhow they deprecate nationalism as being a dangerous monster that must be tamed or suppressed at all costs. Their deprecation implies countless contradictions that seldom disturb the complacency of those holding them. The same politicians who supported the establishment of the brood of new Republics after the late war, were in many cases opposed to the setting-up of the Irish Free State. Yet the last Greenwood broom, sent by a Westminster

Cabinet of Mrs. Partingtons, hopelessly failed to sweep back the rising tide of Nationalism which the sponsors of a spurious internationalism attempted to stem in Ireland.

The present Socialist Administration has its eyes on the ends of the earth, and is busily thinking internationally about self-government for Egypt, India, China, and sundry minorities in the volcanic Balkans. They have no time to waste on the tiresome question of self-government for the Scots. Yet the most insidious form of internationalism has long been at work north of the Tweed, sapping the very character of the Scottish people and gradually reducing them to a colourless hyphenated hybrid both at home and abroad.

To assert that Nationalism is the main source of all the discordant conditions in the world at large is to ignore a host of other contributory causes. Whether for good or for evil, social evolution has achieved an array of vastly different peoples, each of which is endeavouring to express itself through the medium of its own national genius. Just as the alphabet

is the basis for expressing the numerous great literatures of the ages, so are the separate peoples the alphabetic units through which are expressed the mighty notes of national character. It is not a vaguely international outlook that should be cultivated indiscriminately, but rather a cosmic vision on the part of the nationals already evolved.

Biologically, the heart of an organism invariably functions best from a central position. Consequently, the passing of time has seen the evolution of many self-governing units as separate organisms split off from the parent British stock. The people of Australia, Canada, and so forth, are no longer members of the English nation, though they are obviously largely of British descent; but they are distinct nations themselves, each with self-government as its heart. Time will evolve, in the various parts of the Empire, peoples as clearly distinguishable in their cultural values as now are say England and France. The best example of this inevitable evolution, due to geographical position and so on, is to be found in the already vast

difference between the culture of an English subject and of an American citizen who speak almost the same language.

All organizations, whether of nations, of societies, or of religions, reach a point of growth at which disintegration sets in. Empires have come and gone ; religions have risen and disrupted ; races have lived and become moribund, even extinct ; and there is no unconditioned permanency in the world at all. The only thing we can be certain about is that we cannot be certain about anything humanly organized. The constant state of cosmic flux, therefore, leads one to assume that Providence has not yet finished with the evolution of the piece of star-dust that is still recognizable as Scotland. Whether Scotlandshire, in a world crystallizing into new Nationalist organisms, will remain content to be moulded on English lines, like a lump of inert clay, by the Westminster political potterers, is the question of the hour for the Scottish people.

More powerful nations than the Scots have lived and died ; and their dead languages have been preserved only in the

mortuary of the schools. Even the language of the Scots is dying before the corpus of the nation has succumbed, because the ubiquitous and more commercially convenient vehicle of their political conquerors has been substituted and accepted. Thus with the children deprived of access to the fount of their cultural heritage, the time is rapidly approaching when shall arise an Anglicized generation which, without the aid of a glossary, cannot read Burns, not to mention Dunbar and the other genuine makers of Scottish poetry and literature. The process of Anglicization would then be complete with the spectacle of a dead nation, dumb to its own mother tongue, but speaking its adopted language with a perfect accent that only a born imitator could acquire.

Perhaps a people unawake to the necessity of using its own language as the natural cultural expression may welcome the invention of "Esperanto" as a means toward further national effacement and the abolition of war. Esperantists curiously postulate that the use of a common language would be a certain method of paving

the way to universal peace. Where the Bowdlerised versions of the Sixth Commandment have failed, there shall the gift of the Esperanto tongue succeed. The fallacy underlying that most laudable statement is not far to seek. We have but to recall that the civil wars of history were fought by antagonists speaking the same language—Cavalier *v.* Roundhead in England; Presbyterian *v.* Episcopalian in Scotland; Republican *v.* Monarchist in France; Norway *v.* Sweden; North *v.* South in the U.S.A.; Fascism *v.* Liberalism in Italy; Leninism *contra* Czarism in Russia, etc. The allèged chastening influence of a religion in common has never deterred those having moreover a language in common, from killing one another in the name of the Prince of Peace. Only recently the complete understanding of a similar tongue did not prevent the Anglo-Irish war; nor that about the Ulster covering the English shoulders of North Ireland.

It could be urged that a familiar vocabulary enables the members of a family to conduct domestic misunderstandings into the finest shades of difference; but it is

unnecessary to import cynicism into an otherwise conclusive argument. Indeed, good taste often extends to a foreigner that courtesy which is sometimes not available for a fellow-national.

But so long as "the great heart" of the Scottish people is "sound," why wail about the passing of the Doric? "The heart?" Ah, there's the rub! Not the head, wherein are conceived all ideas that mould the destiny of any virile people. Can it be that the Scot is the most sentimental person on earth? What are the Burns' *Nicht's* but orgies of sentimentalism straight from the heart when the head is fuddled with whisky or with mock heroics? The annual spate of sentimentality which pours from the mouths of the oratorical gargoyles on such occasions is undoubtedly a useful safety-valve to be encouraged by the governors of the Westminster political engine. Similarly, Hyde Park "orators" are permitted to "let off steam" in a harmless way that might otherwise be expressed inconveniently in a more troublesome direction. But so spell-bound are the prosperous sentimentalists at the

shrine of Burns that they completely forget he himself would have despised the lot of them to-day for their servility to Westminster rule.

When the world emerged from the alleged Great War into which it had "stumbled"—as the Welshman who won it declared afterwards,—Scotlandshire had undergone exactly twenty-one decades of thirlage to England. Yet this coming-of-age was not celebrated by the bestowal of self-government on the most northerly province. Indeed, why should the English administration grant such a measure, when there was no articulate demand from the Rip van Winkles of Scotlandshire who had done so well out of the war? England never sheathed her Asquithian sword until the territorial integrity of Belgium was secured, and the rights of self-government to sundry minor European peoples were promised—excepting Ireland, of course. But Irish tenacity of purpose succeeded at last in proving that even Irishmen have rights of self-government as well as Belgians and Letts and Finns.

As a consequence of the war sundry

groups of peoples attained complete autonomy, such as Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Finland—not one of which has a population as much as that of Scotlandshire. The renascence of Poland as a self-governing nation has taken place ; and the birth of Czecho-Slovakia out of Balkanic chaos is an accomplished fact. Are we to assume that because the county of Scotland made no specific demand at the Peace Conference for self-government she is therefore content for ever to play second fiddle to England's lead at Westminster ?

Since Ireland has ceased to be a “question,” and been born again as a Nation, there is to-day a growing body of Scots opinion to the effect that the future mark of interrogation confronting the Westminster Parliament must be that of self-government for the Scottish people. Partisan politicians know that the Liberal and Labour Parties have had “Home Rule” in cold-storage under their platforms for some thirty years, but only as a palliative to soothe the feelings of their tiresome “extremists.” Both parties have failed to recognize that since the Peace Conference

this Left Wing is now part of a live bird, and not the frozen mutton in their party-pantries.

With the birth in 1928 of the National Party of Scotland during the month of the Battle of Bannockburn, the “question” is now a “burning” one. The heather is on fire at last, and it will not be put out by the Westminster fire-brigade pumping its political bilge-water upon it from the sinking ship on the Thames.

Rip van Scotland

CHAPTER FIVE

“ You can fool some of the people all of the time ;
and all of the people some of the time ; but you
can’t fool all of the people all of the time.”

(ABRAHAM LINCOLN)

THE election of modern parliaments has taken almost a similar form in all countries. What is called “ Democratic Government ” in the text-books was the popular method of political administration, until the other day, when Mussolini changed all that. It is unfortunately necessary to stress the fact that there is no such thing as Government by Democracy, since Demos is permitted only to exercise his *choice* of governor, who automatically becomes the autocrat or the bureaucrat, whichever label you prefer. No government nowadays is ever actually in financial *power*, but merely in administrative *office*—which is a vastly different function.

Rip van Scotland

In this country when the cackling at the polling-booths has subsided, the victorious Hen Party settles down to lay the golden eggs of policy at the Westminster Poultry Farm. After much broodful labour the clutch is completed, and the period of incubation begun. What triumphant clucking announces the hatching of even a single egg! Many of the eggs prove to be infertile. A frequent source of addling is the quarrel that sometimes happens between two hens of the same breed as to which shall be the Prime Hatcher. In poultry circles, where the language of Billingsgate is handled so classically, this edifying spectacle is known as "dishing" one another. However, the Hen-run usually resumes its normal composure, ruffled feathers are smoothed down, and the rival hens again drink out of the same hopper.

Wearied of sitting longer on eggs that won't hatch, and bored with the constant reproaches of the poultry on the opposite perches, the Prime Hatcher at length challenges her opponents at the quinquennial Poultry Show, where the owners of

the Farm are the judges of the egg-productive capacities of the several promising varieties. There are three important breeds fancied in England, though an odd bantling of an obscure origin usually finds its way to the cockpit at Westminster. After much flapping of Right and Left wings, billing and chucking and promising to lay bigger and better eggs than ever, the Poultry Show ends. It usually happens that the judges, having come to the conclusion that a change of strain might be beneficial, give their votes accordingly ; and a fresh pedigreed breed is introduced to the nesting-boxes at the Hen Farm.

But what of the cock ? Ah, yes, what of the cock ! His function not being egg-laying, obviously he is of no use on the polling-perches where only respectable hens could dutifully promise to lay eggs and still more eggs. While it is true that all ordinary barnyard fowls will go on laying eggs of a sort without the aid of a cock, it so happens that the three stud-book breeds occupying the scratching-pens at Westminster cannot produce a fertile Economic Egg without the connivance of the male bird.

This all-important rooster is very carefully tended by an old lady in Threadneedle Street who lives opposite the Royal Exchange. No matter which pedigreed strain of Hens wins the first prize at the National Poultry Show, it is always the same old Chanticleer who dominates the Hatching Cabinet. No egg ever effectively produces life unless with the indulgence of this indispensable cock of the political dunghill in whom is personified the biological theory of unnatural selection, as enunciated by the doddering old lady.

Thrice since the war have national poultry shows been held, and thrice have the electors been disappointed at the persistent laying of infertile eggs by the chosen hens. At each show the fowl-house has been industriously fumigated with the best political poison-gas ; and every perch has been sprinkled with approved insecticide. The water (on the brain) supply was suspected, but that has been certified satisfactory by all the hens irrespective of breed. The most perfectly equipped drinking-hoppers have been installed—again to the entire satisfaction of the whole

poultry house. The diet has been critically examined from time to time, and changed forthwith when deemed necessary. Russian wheat was stopped by the breed which prefers Empire-grown grain. Wild oats were sown by sundry independent bantams who never reaped them; while the more pacific hens always feed on Quaker Oats. Porridge was tried by the Scottish breeds for a time, but it was soon found that they thrive best on the more highly-seasoned English diet. Some take their food "dry," but most lay eggs better on the "wet" system.

Interminable Committees of Enquiry into egg-production; sundry Poultry Commissions dealing with Empire-Marketing; and countless Pedigree Conferences have been held with the leading hens of other nations. Yet the most carefully produced new-laid eggs are all found in the end to be addled.

At the last show it seems that the spectators had tired of the ineffective promises of the older hens; so the Red Ticket was awarded to the Socialist chickens. This Labour strain is now

labouring to produce the egg de luxe, full of the meat of employment; and an expectant world awaits that well-known cackle with which even the veriest cross-bred hen announces the interesting event.

Poultry-fanciers know that it is necessary to segregate pure-bred birds in order to keep a pedigreed strain immaculate. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Baldwin pen has already exclaimed that the *yolk* of the Socialist "unemployment" egg, freshly-laid in the trap-nests at St. Stephen's, is the contribution of the Tory breed. Nor is it surprising that the Lloyd-George variety has declaimed that the *shell* belongs to the Liberals because it was picked up at Limehouse. It would appear that only the beautifully transparent unaLloyd *white* of this mongrel egg can be mothered on the MacDonald hatching-pen. In any case, the wretched bird would undoubtedly be a cross-breed if it ever hatched out; but that is not possible. Why? Because the old cock is sulking in a corner of his Tokenhouse Yard!

It was the promiscuity of the Poultry

Coalition which sullied the three former pure breeds. For the future, there will be little noticeable difference amongst them, except in a slight variance of colour in their Left Wing feathers, and in their well-known cackles. The last poultry show, indeed, left many independent fanciers with the impression that one of the contaminated breeds bears marks of degeneracy ; and that before long it may be as extinct as the Dodo. Perhaps the introduction of a new kind of trap-nest, patented under the initials of " P.M."—meaning Proportional Misrepresentation—may give the Liberal strain a better chance at the next Show.

Doubtless every conceivable plan will be tried but the right one, which is : *Change the Cock !* For the rival breeds have left no stone unturned—even the Coronation Stone was pecked at by the Clydeside species ! They have taken steps, explored all avenues, investigated every channel, ventilated numerous grievances, called in their experts, looked into the question, made a note of it, perused this evidence, pursued that course, scratched their heads

as well as their pens, answered in the affirmative, replied in the negative, and generally used up the available supply of parliamentary clichés without which no self-respecting hen-run can be managed.

Yet the egg containing the embryo of the solution to Unemployment remains rarer than that of the Great Auk. In spite of the broadcasting of passionate rhetoric from every orthodox political pen, the sums will not work out correctly, because of the obsolete system of accountancy still favoured by the Old Lady.

Rip van Scotland

CHAPTER SIX

“What Englishmen really did when they adopted what they supposed to be an automatic gold standard was to substitute for an English-managed an American-managed standard.”

(PROFESSOR IRVING FISHER)

IT is an assumption of the vast majority of electors that the spectre of Unemployment can be laid by political means, acting within the limits of the existing Financial System. The leaders of the three principal parties have agreed that the restoration of the Gold Standard is the sure foundation for the financial stability of society for the future, despite the fact that orthodox finance was virtually bankrupt in August 1914, when the Moratorium was enacted to obviate such a catastrophe, and the much-vaunted Gold Standard was put into cold storage “for the duration.”

Now the real function of any scientific-

ally managed financial system is to deliver goods and services as and when required by the consumer. Thus to scrap the magic Gold Standard during the international scrap was an acknowledgment that the "principles" of the system were faulty, to say the least. A system which admittedly failed at the most crucial testing time in all its history must surely be suspect in time of peace. Yet we have seen the Gold Standard raised to its former position on the battlefield of international industry, as a preliminary to solving the riddle of the unemployment sphinx.

The industrial system may be likened to a tree, the branches of which are management, labour, machinery, transport, mining and so on—all of them useless without the sap of credit rising from the roots through the trunk of finance to the most distant twigs. At present this vital sap is not circulating freely, and the industrial tree is therefore languishing because the necessary conditions for functioning naturally are denied it. It is suffering from bad circulation of its sap, credit, which is the means of life in any healthy tree.

The extraordinary fact now emerges that control of this health-giving sap called credit is actually the monopoly of the banks. Now the Bank of England itself is a joint-stock company operating primarily in the interest of its private shareholders. It has not paid a penny for the "goodwill" of its profitable monopoly of issuing credit to the community. Yet the financial credit, in which all the banks trade, rests on the "goodwill" of the community made up of consumers. Hence it follows that the banks for their own private profit are permitted by the consumers to lend credit to the consumers themselves, who are the real owners of the credit itself.

There is the tragic height of comedy in this arithmetical drama—the consumer borrowing his own credit at interest; and industries decaying and consumers unemployed, that the sacred banking system may live.

And this wonderful system is known outside Bedlam as "sound finance"—at least the financiers, and the orthodox economists who are their servants, keep

on saying so. For it must be noted that many of the professorial chairs of economics at the universities have been endowed by influential financiers who have "done well" out of "sound finance." Thus a hereditary succession of Gold Standard bearers is readily recruited to keep the flag flying at full mast for yet a little while; and even the snoring from these gilded chairs is frequently broadcasted for the instruction of a world of innocent, blue-eyed consumers who keep wondering what has hit them.

It would be idle to assume that the financier-banker is the unregenerate villain of the industrial tragedy now being enacted. It is obvious that our modern Shylocks—Jew and Gentile alike—have every legal "right" to their pound of profit, and a three-fold political sanction to manipulate the community's credit for their own ends. They are not in business for the good of their health any more than is any other private trader. It is the money system itself that is at fault, and not merely the men who are permitted to handle it; though it is only too patent

that high finance is to-day running on its past reputation, like a Rolls-Royce car without its engine.

This system will continue until the public at large decides to abolish such an iniquitous institution as the private control of the credit belonging to the public. A banking oligarchy working with such ineffective "principles" that, *without State aid*, they failed in their distributive function during the war, is incompetent to control much longer the ever-progressive productive system. It seems that this hallowed banking system works best under war-time conditions (with the proviso that the precious Gold Standard shall be put meanwhile in the national pawnshop), for, since the industrial era began, distribution never attained its acme of perfection until the war happened.

It was then possible for the country to let 7,000,000 men go soldiering; and at the same time to carry on efficiently the essential industries at home with the C3 remnant, their elders, and the women. The depleted ranks of labour were able not only to produce the necessities required

for the industrially unproductive fighting forces, but so to over-produce that the surplus goods have not been absorbed even yet after ten years of peace. Moreover, the whole population during the war enjoyed a standard of living never before nor since achieved.

Lord D'Abernon recently expressed his opinion in a book to the following effect : " Lord Cunliffe was right when he said : ' It was a good thing for England that at the time of the Great War crisis two people were in charge of English finances who *knew nothing about finance* '—i.e., Lloyd George and himself." Now, Lord Cunliffe was Governor of the Bank of England at that time ; hence we have to choose whether this statement is proof of his excessive modesty or of his colossal effrontery. It is certainly not ignorance of high finance that is the noble lord's failing, since he knows too well that it is the continued ignorance of his customers which enables the banks to lend this credit of the owners to those self-same owners of it.

Inflation having been condemned, not

by our elected Parliament, but by decree of our real though unelected Government at the Bank of England, the opposite course, deflation, was begun after the war, and is still being followed. Industry at once began to decline, and various attempts at artificial respiration have been tried; but the patient shows few signs of mending permanently. Scientific management, speeding-up, efficiency propaganda, mass-production, rationalization, and the like, are still being administered in doses suitable to the invalid's strength. Doubtless those American dopes will enable him to function more or less galvanically for yet a few years.

But all such desperate remedies for a diseased industrial system that is undergoing metamorphosis, are doomed to failure so long as the tacit understanding is: Hands off the credit monopoly. A tinkering with effects is no remedy when the cause of those periodical slumps is left uncovered. The *Financial Times*, in a leading article, publicly warned Mr. Lloyd George when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the City could destroy

any "Government" which interfered with credit policy. Does not that unveiled threat correctly show the fallacy in the popular belief that ANY political administration at Westminster is ever the real GOVERNMENT? Can it be doubted that the Cock of the Walk is kept in the City, since "the City" of high finance has itself admitted it with a sublime contempt for electoral opinion that is fully justified? Doubtless the able editor of the quoted newspaper had his knuckles well rapped by the owners of the Old Rooster; for the said owners, although they know there is nothing permanent in the money system now in operation, are more discreet than to mention the fact publicly.

The history of dead empires, as well as of living nations, shows the necessity they have had for altering from age to age their bases of economics in order to meet the growing needs of a progressive people. In Western Europe feudalism gave way to the Guild System, which in turn was displaced by the Capitalism of the past few centuries. In a world that has little use for the Gospel of St. Mark except on

Sundays, it was only natural that the newer Gospel of St. Marx should captivate the minds of considerable numbers of people. Thus the Jew was once more preferred, instead of the Christian. Aware that there was "something wrong somewhere," the masses revolted at the result of a Capitalism which failed to provide all the manual workers with decent homes and constant employment. Thus Socialism for several decades has been accepted by many politicians as the next phase in the evolution of modern society. But there is considerable evidence that this belief is likely to prove wrong.

The Labour-Socialist propaganda made its popular appeal with the captivating idea that the majority of people were poor *because* the minority were so rich. In an age of ever-increasing riches, running parallel with ever-increasing unemployment, it was human—all too human—that the idea of sharing out should "catch on." Since the politicians themselves were as much in the dark as their constituents regarding the workings of orthodox finance, this appeal to a passionate sense of "justice"

led to the rapid growth of Socialism.

The present Socialist Administration is to be welcomed for one reason, and one reason only. Provided that it is permitted by the grace of "the City" and the two opposition Parties, to continue in office for a few years, it will result in the complete exposure of its failure to solve the insoluble unemployment problem within the existing financial dispensation. Mr. Thomas himself stated within a few weeks of his first taking office that he had no hope of solving this vital problem. For this Conservative-Socialist gentleman is Liberal-minded enough to recognize that within the pale of orthodox finance *no party can solve it*. The Socialist eggs are thus already addled; yet the hens in the Cabinet still sit upon them, broodily hopeful, though they gleefully counted their chickens even before the last poultry show.

Many adherents of the Capitalist basis of society seem to forget that it was not in existence in the Stone Age, but that it is of comparatively modern origin. It is certainly not the last word which civilized man has to say about social evolution, for

Capitalism is no part of the permanent order of things any more than is Socialism.

The fact that the three chief political parties at Westminster are unanimous in their support of the existing banking system, is sufficient basis for the postulate that the Socialist and the Capitalist concepts of finance are fundamentally one, though they may appear superficially different. It is true to say that "the City" cares not one jot or tittle who occupies the post of Prime Hatcher at Westminster, so long as the Bank of England has the power to control the exchequered career of the Great Hen occupying temporarily the Chancellor's perch.

That we need not expect any radical change in the basis of banking from the present Labour Administration is a foregone conclusion. Did not the present Socialist Chancellor, during his previous term of office in 1925, tell his hosts at a Mansion House banquet, that he hoped "always to remain the friends of the bankers"? Had Mr. Snowden been tipsy when he uttered these words his lapse

would have been understandable. But as he is a practising teetotaller, the inference must be that Philip sober is no better than Philip drunk.

When "the City" dined the Socialist Chancellor for the second time in the summer of 1929, the festive-board was enlivened by Mr. Snowden with the following profundity: "I may say, parenthetically, that with every increase of national trade and with every increase in profits, there is the more for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to tax."

"There's richness!" as an equally eminent Chancellor of another Exchequer, the late Wackford Squeers, once said on a much similar occasion. That mathematical meridian could not have been attained by a common M.P. receiving only £400 per annum (all platitudes found). Indeed, it should go far to allay that pernicious feeling of the vulgar electorate which stupidly imagines that £5,000 a year is too much even for a Chancellor. Mr. Snowden's dictum contains a truth which must be explained so that even an elector having that schoolgirl complex may under-

stand it. Like all great sayings, however, it is difficult to translate its purity into everyday language; but here goes: "I may say, as a test of my soberness, that for every increase of £1 in profits from national trade, there is 4/- of income tax payable on it."

In support of this feeble effort to extract the truth out of this Socialist philippic, it should be stated that Mr. McKenna recognized its epoch-making import by remarking later that he was "delighted to hear the Chancellor recognized that the real source of revenue was a prosperous industry." A Tory speaker also confirmed the accuracy of Mr. Snowden's arithmetic, even though there was no accounting-machine to check it.

Thus we may be quite certain that the financial policy of the Socialist Hen Party is identical with that of the other two strains, so far as the Gold Standard is concerned. For the same old financial cock salutes the dawn over the Chancellor's pen no matter which breed of political hens lustily pecks in the granary at the Mansion House.

Rip van Scotland

CHAPTER SEVEN

“The British Empire has fallen into our hands.”
(MR. WALTER H. PAGE, *American Ambassador in London, August, 1914.*)

THE fabled Irishman's method of lengthening his blanket by cutting a strip off the top edge and sewing it on to the bottom finds its amusing parallel in the operations of high finance. The intermittent slumps and booms are finance's clumsy way of lengthening the industrial blanket by cutting the inflation strip off at the top and tacking it on to the bottom later as deflation. The natural result is that in either case a portion of the unemployment spectre is left out in the cold. So utterly inefficient as a scientific means of distribution is this blankety-blank money system that production has to ca' canny at frequent intervals to enable finance to make up some of the leeway.

“ Restriction of output ” is the term applied to the Capitalist side of the shield, the obverse of which is called “ ca’ canny ” by the Socialists.

This arbitrary brake on output has been applied in the case of oil, tea, rubber, cotton, timber, slates, steel, wheat, meat, and a host of other commodities. Wheat has been burnt in North America as fuel to maintain a higher price for the diminished supply allowed to go to market. Calves have been shot in vast numbers in South America with the same object in view. A bumper fruit crop may be a curse in disguise ; for it is cheaper to let it rot on the trees when the market-price is less than the cost of plucking the fruit. It is often the case that a truck-load of vegetables sent from Yorkshire to Covent Garden does not fetch enough money by auction as will pay for the cost of transport. It is well-known that deep-sea fishermen have frequently to dump back into the ocean millions of dead fish in order to prevent a glut on the market, with consequently lower prices.

And all that the politicians do about

such positive evidence of the failure of a superlative money system is to call for an increased production (of fishes?), a lowering of the cost of the raw materials (of fishes?), and a reduction of fishermen's wages (when consumers would then have less money to spend than before).

A civilized society which is blessed by Providence with a plentiful supply of food stuffs, yet cannot make full use of them, stands self-condemned, when there is so much poverty and hunger and frequently famine in the world. That the bounty of Nature should spell ruin to food-producers unless artificial restriction is employed, is surely the apotheosis of high-brow finance, which trades on the ignorance of economics on the part of low-brow politicians and electors.

This silly abasement of the producer-consumers at the feet of the gods of "sound finance" obliges one in the interests of sanity to assume that certainly more sound than finance comes from Chanticleer in the City.

Some politicians suggest that a return to inflation might mend the industrial patient,

if only temporarily. But what is needed is not merely alleviation of the low fever of employment, but its radical cure. We have only to turn to the case of the U.S.A. to see the effects of the inflationary policy still in operation there. American unemployment is even proportionately higher than it is in this country, though there are no official figures available for exact comparison. Japan again is faced with the similar bogey of under-employment; and she is already our keen competitor in the trade markets of the world. India is waking up from her millenary sleep, though it remains to be seen whether she will completely Westernize her industries as Japan has done. Egypt also is fast becoming industrially conscious. Our colonies are already our competitors in many branches of industry; while Germany and France and Italy are cutting us out of much of our overseas trade. The potentialities of Russia and China, as formidable competitors before long, have only to be mentioned to complete the perspective of the industrial landscape that lies before modern manufacturing peoples.

It must be clear even to political bantams and electoral chickens that world-markets are inexorably shrinking, since more countries have entered the production arena. The limits of export trade for the "progressive" nations can already be envisaged, because the "backward" peoples are fast becoming industrialized—at a lower rate of wages than obtain in Western civilization—and the problem of employment will be therefore still more intensified. This international scramble for markets, running parallel with the persistent invention of automatic contrivances, must inevitably lead to more unemployment somewhere. Our primary concern of the immediate future must be to eliminate under-consumption in the home-market before exporting to foreign markets at all. Under a scientifically sound financial system our exports should be the over-spill of a thoroughly saturated home-market. A money system which fails so to regulate prices as to equate them with the purchasing-power of the consumer-population, is most certainly a dying institution applying elementary arithmetic

to a problem that will yield only to a mathematical formula. Utopian, is it? Not at all; rather is the existing money system a Utopian attempt to fill a quart measure into a pint pot; whereas even a "pussyfoot" knows that a pint pot will hold only a pint.

The intensified competition for trade both at home and abroad for all manufacturing nations is inexorably hastening the process of trustification, amalgamation, pooling of resources, affiliation, and the other names variously given to the many phases of modern joint-stock development. Rationalization is the latest label for the silver trowel to be used in laying the foundation-stone of the new Temple of Industry. But, like all trowels for similar ceremonies, it will prove ultimately to be temporarily ornamental rather than permanently useful. This sub-conscious recognition that Capital and Labour are not "natural enemies" may yet lead them to become fully conscious that it is the money system which is the real stumbling-block in the way of the "rationalization" of the function of distribution.

In spite of the tongue-in-cheek homage paid to individualism by every politician and business man who is not a Socialist, the actual development of modern industry is taking the form of an inverted Socialism. Tories and Liberals alike are busy amalgamating hitherto private individualistic companies into gigantic concerns to meet the competition of similar organizations in other countries. Labour leaders who formerly preached "the class-war" are now co-operating with their "old enemy" with the avowed object of competing internationally for trade-outlet. Thus certain industries are already well on the way to becoming "rationalized" into vast semi-socialistic units of workers by "hand and brain" as the only way they can find to meet the fierce competition from abroad.

Nationalization of the means of production and so on is the doubtful foundation upon which the tentative Socialistic structure is specified to be built. But it is this very platform which the advocates of Rationalization may themselves use at the most favourable moment. The railways, for example, were trustified after the war

at the behest of American finance operating through the Bank of England. The next step will probably be the "taking over" of the existing railway stocks and shares at an agreed valuation, and issuing State Bonds bearing a fixed rate of interest. This simple clerical operation would result in the same "Capitalists" retaining the same interest-bearing bonds, while the same "workers" would be wheeling the same barrows, loading the same trucks, pulling the same signal-levers, stoking the same engines, and so forth—the taxpayers including the nationalized railway-workers, meanwhile footing the bill for interest, payable punctually twice a year, whether there be a profit or a loss in any given year. It should take little business capacity to realize that State Bonds bearing regular dividends is a more satisfactory arrangement for the holders, than ordinary or deferred or preference shares which have produced few dividends, if any, for several years.

When the public have become duly inoculated with the new social serum—rationalization—one may expect that the

Conservatives themselves will be the first to agree to "nationalization," if it be not actually a Conservative administration that will "put it across" in the end. Who knows but that the continued depression in the coal trade may be used by astute Rationalizationists as the preliminary to their "accepting the inevitable" victory of Socialist nationalization?

The Banks themselves gave the lead to "rationalization" after the war, when the "Big Five" made "working arrangements" with one another for the future, again at the dictation of New York. Their ramifications are still spreading; and the latest phase is the International Bank for dealing with the German Reparations payments. How the much-lauded spirit of "internationalism" is to be put into effect in a world organizing for keener international competition than ever, is a tough problem for poultry cabinets everywhere; though it is probably true that if the ethics of a competent poultry expert were applied as vigorously to the problem of credit-control, the answer might not be an addled egg at Westminster.

Can it be that, in their advocacy of increased exports, orthodox finance and orthodox industry are consciously heading for another civil war? (All war between civilized peoples, in this twentieth century, is civil war.) Can it be that they will risk civil war abroad in their compulsory search for markets, in order to avoid the somewhat uncivil war that may arise in any case at home if the pressing problem of employment is not otherwise solved? For High Finance, striving to uphold its own system, is incapable of reducing the number of unemployed even to "normal" proportions except through another war. Capital, as well as Labour, remembers too well the "easy money" that came its way during "the last war to end war," and consequently does not object seriously to the next one.

The boast that the financial system "came out of the war in triumph," without relating that alleged triumph to the Industrial System, is an instance of that laxity of expression which is the familiar language of our financial governors. For there is relation in all subjects comprehended by the human mind, if language is to mean

anything more than simian chatter. When the potential capacity of modern scientific production is related to the utterly unscientific method of distribution, an interesting fact emerges. It is that while industrialists in their efforts to increase the means of production have invariably to apply every known scientific discovery and invention, the financiers are still adhering to their long-obsolete mechanism of distribution. In this twentieth century of high-speed mechanical production, the same financial system is in operation as was invented for use two centuries ago when *manual* production was the only known method. While production advanced in seven-league boots, finance crawled along on hands and knees. Is it any wonder that this old-fashioned distributive mechanism has had periodically to apply the brakes on production to enable the former to make up some of the leeway? The Industrial Marathon has been a devastating series of attempts by the short-winded Old Lady of Threadneedle Street to catch up to the adaptable young gods out of the machines. Hence

the succession of slumps and booms that occur with such ever-increasing frequency that many erroneously assume that these phenomena are as natural as the seasons—a belief in “inevitability” which High Finance does its best to foster in academic and political circles with considerable success. This failure of the Old Lady to function distributively is financially no credit to her; though it is true that she still controls the credit of the community with a vigour that is undoubtedly a great credit to one of her ripe age.

What is this mysterious power which balks the consumer from enjoying the fullest benefits of science? Why this baffling lag of distribution behind production? It is mainly because science has not yet been applied to that private branch of industry which still has the privilege of controlling the issue of credit. Secrecy naturally prevails in our physical laboratories; but nowhere is there more elaborate precaution taken than in the supra-physical laboratories of the financial trade, which jealously seeks to preserve its secrets relative to credit issue.

Economics may be likened to a spring at the source of the river of politics. When the whole river is muddy it would be futile to instal a purification works anywhere downstream. Only by cleaning out the well of economics at the fountainhead may the river of politics become financially purified. Industrialists would receive more useful help from a few empirical engineering formulæ than they are ever likely to get from a wilderness full of Imperialist or Socialist politicians or financiers.

So long as credit is controlled by *private* individuals for personal profit, instead of by the King's representatives for the common weal, just so long must the financier and the industrialist look to foreign markets for trade outlet. Unless a scientific scheme of credit reform is adopted, whereby control shall be restored to its rightful owners, the King's subjects, there can be no return even to pre-war standards in this country. Indeed, the more unemployment and foreign competition increase, the sooner the next war will be on us ; for until the question of credit control is tackled at its roots the great

industrialized peoples must flounder out of one war into another with every increasing velocity.

Orthodox economists assert that high costs of production prevent cheap distribution, *therefore* costs must be reduced before prices can be cheapened. The humour in that "therefore" is of the essence of great tragedy; for such a formula implies that finance itself is above suspicion. It is first a problem in psychology, not in politics. Until a psychological reaction sets in against mere political tinkering with the defective mechanism of our money system, no real solution can be attempted. All parliamentary administrations—whether Tory, Liberal, Socialist, Republican, Democratic, Communist, Bolshevik, or Fascist—are able to function politically at all only with the tacit support of international finance. The immediate point to be considered by financially conscious electors is whether the money system under which civilization groans must be accepted as final. Many students of social evolution are already aware that a change is not only coming,

Rip van Scotland

but is already in progress. Evolution is not necessarily a step upward. It may be ; but equally it may not be. The two aspects of the newest world-crisis are : How best to cope with the tribulations during the period of disintegration of the existing system ; and how to set about reducing the length of time before the new integration is achieved. Until mass-consciousness revolts psychologically, the politicians will continue to sing their lullabies over the innocent Rip van Winkles who hopefully but pathetically go on recording their votes at each election.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

“ Poets and philosophers are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.”

(SHELLEY)

WHEN the Great War was succeeded by the great slump in 1920 all the world was perplexed. Politicians and public alike were dumbfounded by the unexpected which usually happens. During the first year of peace the hoardings were plastered with that triple-tongued slogan : “ Produce ! Produce ! Produce ! ” All the “ best brains ” in the three political parties were in agreement on that policy. Labour-leaders lent their sermons and their photographs to be exhibited alongside those of their alleged “ enemies ” of the Capitalist Parties. Liberals liberally held themselves up to future ridicule in the open-air picture galleries. Conservatives subserviently applauded their Conservatively minded, laboriously Liberal friends.

Full steam ahead was the cheerful order of the day, as the Tory-Liberal-Labour crew set sail for the industrial paradise from the poultry farm at Westminster.

And the Old Rooster down at Threadneedle Street crowed once—for it was not to Paradise but to Purgatory that it had headed the Ark of the Coalition.

Let us examine this failure of industry to deliver the goods in 1920 and onwards as it had succeeded in delivering them during the more difficult period covered by the war. During the 150 years previously England had the world-market mainly in her hands, until Germany and the U.S.A. became her rivals in the mercantile field. With the industrialization of Germany after the Franco-German War, commercial rivalry with England in foreign markets became accentuated. Unrestricted competition in the field of trade had its logical outcome in unrestricted competition on the field of battle. Expansion of exports must ultimately lead to a clash of arms between peoples desperately seeking a trade-outlet for their surplus manufactures under the existing money system.

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It is only charitable to assume that there are few responsible people in the world who still believe that the late war was fought by an allied aviary of angels against an inferno of Teutonic devils. Human emotions are apt to boil over during the stress of that wave of patriotic fearfulness which flooded reason in 1914. For the war arose mainly because of the economic pressure exerted in the chief manufacturing countries by ever-growing populations whose volume of output was being increased daily by the extended use of high-power machinery and by more scientific methods of production. Thus the problem of employment is the Gorgon's Head confronting every parliament in the civilized world to-day, despite the tragedy of the last war. It is the problem which *must* be solved if civilization, as we now know it, is not to be utterly destroyed by the next war.

The memory of mortals being almost as short as their temper, it may be helpful to recall certain aspects of the industrial situation in this country in 1919. Private concerns were "floated" as limited liability companies at as much as four times the

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pre-war capitalization. War-time profits were said to "justify" this high valuation, during the vogue of inflation as the monetary policy.

Overdrafts were freely granted by the Banks almost to any "level-headed practical" man who applied for credit. Manufacturers jostled one another in bank corridors as they went to seek more credit for purchasing their raw materials at ever-increasing prices. The policy of inflation went to their heads, and took other forms. Otherwise sane men became themselves inflated with the megalomaniac idea that it was their own wonderful powers of organization and financial foresight which enabled them to make "fortunes" during the war; whereas it was mainly because they were accidentally in "starred trades" for the time being. When the policy of deflation was at last initiated, there was not a feather ruffled in the barnyard at St. Stephen's.

And, amid the usual political silence at such moments, Chanticleer on his perch near the Mansion House was heard to crow a second time !

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While the creation of an overdraft by a Bank is mainly a book-entry of figures representing financial credit of a stipulated amount of "money" at a fixed rate of interest payable by the borrower, the portion of an overdraft "called in" by a Bank is not also a mere book-entry. Hard cash or fluid securities are required to meet a repayment of overdraft. Thus when the Bank demanded the first repayment of overdraft, the manufacturer was faced with only one way of fulfilling his obligation. He had to make hasty sales of his goods; and, since his competitors had to do likewise, the prices of his wares had to be reduced forthwith. In course of time even the smallest margin of profit disappeared, and soon selling at "cost" price was his ruinous policy. As more overdraft was "called in," his plight became such that he had to sell "under cost", otherwise the Bank had the power of making the borrower bankrupt. Ultimately goods were sold at a fraction of "cost." Thus the full depth of the slump was experienced by a mystified Conservatively Liberal world of Labourless voters.

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In Lancashire, just after the war, there was a point-to-point race for the "glittering prizes" so dear to the heart of the late F. E. E. Smith, who won renown as a galloper during the flat season in Ireland before the war. The Labour leaders and the led alike joined in this national sporting event with their bosses. Everything was as "democratic" as a race meeting. The hatchet, having been used abroad for four years, was then brought home and buried. 'Twas a famous victory, indeed; and the Church's prophecy of a great religious awakening to the brotherhood of man seemed on the point of being realized. The milk of human kindness was such a prevalent liquid that anyone could have as much of it as he wanted. The "class-war," like the Great War, had ceased at last; and cotton operatives became capitalists in every street in every slum in the county. The Red Flag flapped fraternally over the Red Rosebush under which the industrial bone of contention had been patriotically buried nine days previously.

Then the trade wind began to blow in the opposite direction. Deflation was its

course ; and even Wigan soon recognized that it was draughty weather for capitalists. When the economic monsoon subsided, the now-deflated " capitalist " found that the bailiffs, personified by the Banks, were in possession of " his " factories. The Gold Standard bearers had taken the place of the Red Flag waverers. Both ancient and modern capitalists were left with their glittering prize specimens of the engraver's art. These share-certificates, however, were less negotiable than a pawn ticket ; for the owners of them were under legal obligation to provide the unpaid balance of their par denomination. Hence the milk of human kindness was apportioned in the traditional manner of Big Business—the Banks took the debenture cream ; the preference shareholders had the skim-milk ; and the ordinary shareholders were left with the empty jug. Thus John Dull experienced the benefits to be derived from John Bright's gospel of Free Trade—in share-certificates and for company-promoters and bankers. Thus while Capital rails at Labour ; and Labour curses Capital, the other dog, Finance,

runs off with the bone for which the two active partners in industry contend. Logic demands the inference that High Finance is the most pernicious Trade Union in the whole world of commerce.

“*Si monumentum requiris, circumspice!*”—for the present deflationary decade is a veritable cemetery of monuments over the graves of bankrupt companies covering the majority of industries. Drastic reconstructions have taken place in concerns of world-wide reputation; millions of money have been “written off”; yet trade fails to rally. Countless firms which escaped reconstruction have nevertheless failed to pay dividends even on their Preference shares.

Our warehouses after the slump began were full from garret to cellar with merchandise that could not be distributed because of the lack of purchasing-power in the pockets of the home-consumers. Manchester was packed with cotton-cloth, yet the unemployed operatives who made it were unable to purchase shirts. Bradford was bulging with woollens, yet the mill-worker was powerless to buy a suit; and

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wartime millionaires were soon worth about 2/6 in the £ at the Bankruptcy Court. The sidings in the coalfields were blocked with piled trucks, yet the collier in winter was precluded from burning the coal. Clydeside was stacked with steel, but the seas were even more stocked with ships. Lancashire was exporting textile machinery to-day and expecting to sell cotton goods to-morrow as usual. But the morning after the night before, even she, as well as England, realized that every machine exported was her own future competitor. Even "hard-headed" cotton magnates awoke to the fact that the selling of brand-new textile plant to Japan was the quickest way to bring to a standstill the obsolete machines at home. The huge stocks of surplus war-materials that came on the market also "did their bit" to check new production; while the Reparations payments in kind from Germany still further congested the world-markets.

Having crossed the Red Sea of Armageddon the populace was left wondering why it was not yet in the Promised Land of Prosperity. Fortunately the politicians

know that the memory of an elector seldom covers a period longer than nine days. Hence they broadcasted the comforting message to their purblind constituents that the slump was "inevitable" because it happened after the Napoleonic Wars as well!

When the Old Lady read this announcement in her evening paper she dropped a new strait-waistcoat she was knitting for the next Chancellor of the Exchequer and gave voice to such a weird chuckle of amusement that her Chanticleer, half dozing, fell off his perch in surprise.

Everybody wondered why this country suffered such an unprecedented slump, especially as we had "won the war"; and the Great Panjandrums of the Three Star Parties had their prophecies utterly falsified. The fallacy in their silly parroting of "Produce!" was exposed by students of the New Economics even before the slump had set in; and "hard-headed" E.P.D. dodgers called them "currency cranks." These "wrong-headed" pessimists are now deemed to have been prophets, whereas they had merely applied

arithmetic to the transparent mysteries of the money system. Nobody but a "practical business man" would attach the word prophet to a good arithmetician who accurately uses the Law of Number in dealing with the alleged law of Supply and Demand.

The arithmetician recognized that Great Britain and the U.S.A. together, as a consequence of war-time expansion of plant, were capable of *producing* at least 50 per cent. more rapidly in 1919 than in 1914. During the same period the area of *distribution* had shrunk considerably because Central Europe and Russia (not to mention other countries) were out of the market, if only temporarily. There is no need to drag in the question of the difference in the rate of exchange ; for the command of the Political Trinity was the magic word : "Produce !" unrelated to money at all. Now a 50 per cent. increased capacity of *production*, coupled with even the pre-war area of *distribution* (though obviously it was reduced because 10,000,000 men had met their deaths in the war) could only spell the word SLUMP.

Yet the spell-binders in Parliament sat ingloriously mute at this ominous writing on the wall of their hen-run when the slump happened. When they found their voices, it was to announce that if the people would only possess their souls in patience till the spring, trade would then be better. When spring brought no improvement, Democracy was again assured by politicians in general and bank-chairmen in particular, that there were "certain signs" for hopefulness that in the autumn industry would be busier. The autumn came . . . and went . . . and still no effective change took place; but there was every prospect that in the spring the corner would be turned. The spring came . . . and went . . . the same old prophecy for the autumn. The autumn came . . . and went . . . the same old prophecy for the spring. And so the pretty game of See-Saw, Marjory Dawes scheming went merrily forward.

It should not be lightly assumed that there was no anxiety being felt during all these years at the poultry farm. So well did our hen parties do their duty to their country in its peaceful hour of need that

they cackled louder than ever. Even the Coalition Cabinet was smothered in a cloud of feathers, and the rival breeds swore never again to lay their eggs in the same nest. They have each laid separately what they thought to be the golden egg so much required, containing the phoenix of full employment, but after dutiful brooding and tedious incubation, the eggs have invariably turned out to be duds—like many of those other shells that failed to function on the battlefields. This over-production of bad eggs is in striking contrast to the under-distribution of goods which is the main cause of the chronic political insomnia afflicting all hen-runs to-day.

This failure of parliaments to lay the egg of eggs has led a chastened electorate to wonder whether, after all, the nation is too niggardly in its payment of M.P.'s. A beggarly £400 a year is surely insufficient to attract that higher type of mind which finds its spiritual home on Bank directorates and on the Boards of Financial Corporations. The raw—very raw—material of the parliamentary machine seems to

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require the benefits of rationalization ; for safe-guarding duties seem to be levied upon it by High Finance as each hen enters the poultry farm.

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CHAPTER NINE

“Great believers are always reckoned infidels, impracticable, fantastic, atheistic, and really of no account.”

(EMERSON)

SCIENCE has been applied to most departments of human activity.

Even religion has been unable to resist its doctrines ; but finance alone has remained adamant against the cosmic influence of scientific discovery. Ever since science and religion were said to have parted company toward the middle of last century, a strangely fallacious situation has been maintained between them. The leading theologians took their official stand against Darwin's disturbing theories. They feared that the Darwinian explanation of the origin of species might undermine the belief of their flocks in the story of the Creation described so picturesquely in Genesis. Those preachers of the Gospel

of Love, in all their mutually exclusive compartments, were at least united in their fear that the new theory of genetics was subversive of "established" dogma. For forty years the battle raged between Adam and the Ape; and it was not until Edward the Peacemaker was defending the faith that the rival factions were deemed at last to be reconciled.

It has often been remarked that the leaders of religion have usually been slow to recognize the importance of the new discoveries in science from time to time. Galileo's famous aside—"But it does move"—has often failed to move Orthodoxy out of its comfortable grooves of belief, except after a considerable lapse of time. The stone which the early builders rejected has frequently become "the head of the corner" for a later generation. Thus the depth of Agassiz's observation is sounded from age to age. The Swiss thinker wrote: "Every scientific truth goes through three stages. First, people say it conflicts with the Bible. Next they say it had been discovered previously. Lastly they say that they had always believed it."

The suspicious attitude of religion to science has induced the scientist to look askance at any observation passed by a theologian on a matter of scientific discovery. In doing so, however, science is apt unwittingly to slip its head into the noose usually filled by religion. Scientists indulgently smile upon dogmas of theology, but often are forgetful that their own theories are likewise based on dogmas. Of course, the scientist uses another name that is much less suspect than dogma—he calls his dogmas postulates or working hypotheses. Nay, he even presses his dogmatism so far as to classify some of it as axioms. Now, an axiom in science, until the other day, may be said to have been in a similar category to the dogmatic belief in, say, transubstantiation. But Einstein has lately assured us that it was only by “challenging an axiom” that he discovered what he postulates to be the truth of his theory of relativity. Thus the axiom of science and the dogma of religion are demonstrated to be synonymous when handled etymologically and logically.

Unfortunately, all salaried preachers of

the Gospel are not at the same time religious men in the Christian meaning of the term. Likewise, all men earning their livelihood in the several fields of science are not necessarily scientific thinkers, though most of them make that assumption another of their many postulates. They unscientifically fail to observe that the rank and file in any branch of knowledge are merely *imitators*, and that only a tiny majority are actually *creators* or discoverers of new truths. When a well-informed layman ventures to pass a carefully considered criticism of a doubtful dogma expounded by an orthodox professional, he will often meet with the indignant or the condescending disapproval of an imitative-scientist caught out of his depth and away from his text-books. How dares a "rank outsider" question the pontifical postulates of a professional pot-boiler? Thus quite unconsciously the imitative-scientist adopts the method of his brother dogmatist, the theologian. It may be said to be the only occasion in which the lion of science lies down with the lamb of religion. Perhaps the reason why the lamb

is not inside the lion may be because in the darkness neither is aware of the other's presence.

Again, the imitative-scientist who teaches or expounds political economy often affects to dismiss the conclusions of the "amateur" who ventures to study the subject for himself, free from the cobwebs of the lecture-halls. Should the "amateur" go the length of "challenging an axiom" that has been "accepted" by generations of professionals in the "dismal science," it is enough to make the very bones of Adam Smith to rise and mutiny. But the professionals must be reminded that pioneers of new theories are not invariably to be found in the ranks of those investigating or expounding a particular subject for a living. Generations of professional political economists dilated on the "law" of supply and demand before it was possible to confine the misnomer derisively between inverted commas.

It is unscientific though instinctive to postulate that because a man has walked the medical halls and the clinics for the specified number of years he is therefore

the only scientifically trained thinker fit to cope with the healing of disease. It is this dogmatical exclusiveness of orthodox *materia medica* which barred the door against the admission of Sir Herbert Barker to the Surgical Trade Union, though it is a useful working hypothesis to adopt in regard to the imitative scientists who form the majority in the medical profession.

This forbidden-fruit policy is notoriously unscientific. As well might it be maintained that until a dramatic critic has written a play along orthodox lines he is not qualified to practise his profession. With as little show of reason might it be asserted that Mr. Bernard Shaw is no dramatist because he has not had the hall-mark officially stamped on his education by a university.

The truth is that pioneers have an uncanny knack of appearing unceremoniously from the least-expected sources. Neither the palace nor the hovel is immune from the visits of Minerva. It is useless to plead that the shoemaker should stick to his last, for Hans Sachs was something

more than a craftsman in leather. Must mental activity always be condemned to work in spheres separated by Chinese-walls of rigid exclusiveness? Is it scientific to ignore the individual who successfully co-ordinates different manifestations of thought? Country-squire Hampden declined to pay what he considered to be an illegally levied tax; and he lit a lamp in England that has not yet been put out. Country-bumpkin Washington rose from his log-cabin and cleaned a few pages of history that had been clumsily thumb-marked by a divinely righteous king's ministry. The Jews and the Gentiles of Palestine were aghast when the journeyman carpenter, son of the village coffin-maker at Nazareth, was so immodest as to "challenge the axioms" of the professional money-changers and theologians of his generation.

Likewise, the modern Jewish and Gentile money-changers were dismayed when Major C. H. Douglas in 1919 "challenged the axioms" of orthodox finance with a mathematical formula that cannot be refuted. Not that Mr. Douglas is to be

classed as another "saviour" of society. He may think, perhaps, that a society which willingly submits to the existing financial system is not worth saving. Besides, High Finance, by its lengthy but significant success in securing the suppression of his name in the obedient Press, looks upon him as The Very Devil Incarnate, who has at last picked the lock of their heaven where their treasured Gold Standard reposes.

It is quite in accordance with the deep-rooted predispositions of "human nature" that when Mr. Douglas, who is a consultant electrical-engineer of world-wide repute professionally, presumes to "challenge an axiom," hoary as the science of economics itself, the professors of the subject decline to discuss the celebrated Douglas theorem publicly. Contemptuously dismissing an "amateur" daring to poach on their own private preserves, they make game of themselves by ignoring a most amusing fact—that the first man to formulate the modern science of political economy was himself not engaged professionally in teaching it, nor was he interested directly

in trade or in finance. Adam Smith was first a professor of logic ; then of moral philosophy ; and finally was Commissioner of Customs in Scotland.

In every department of human endeavour is to be observed the attempts of the upholders of all forms of orthodoxy to oppose the march of the Time-Spirit. History repeats itself with almost monotonous recurrence. Scientific investigation is a continuous process of trial and rejection or acceptance—a constant sifting of new ideas, theories, discoveries, and inventions, conducted in an atmosphere of calm disinterestedness by men indifferent whether the result be a new dye to add to the gaiety of nations, or a new explosive capable of subtracting a nation from the face of the earth. Within the past century, engineering science has steam-ploughed the seven seas from pole to pole ; sown bridges across hitherto impassable ravines and quagmires ; and harrowed the feelings of this generation with implements of war unknown only fifteen years ago. It transformed the hackneyed fable of the phoenix into a fact ; for from the ashes of

“ Armageddon ” arose its greatest mechanical victory—the conquest of the air. It has reduced distance to zero by means of “ wireless ”—that singularly unscientific name for radiography about the operations of which there is now less mystery than about that of the credit monopoly. It has discovered through Mr. Douglas that while the existing banking system is an excellent private institution for controlling credit even during periods of slump, yet that system nevertheless fails abjectly in its real social function of *distributing* regularly the goods and services to the people upon whose credit the whole industrial and financial fabric actually rests. That obsolete system bears as little resemblance to scientific economics as a ton of cinders does to a hundredweight of live coal.

That the Douglas shell has had an effect on orthodox finance as devastating as the Mills bomb had in the sphere of orthodox ballistics is now a truism. It was in the nature of things that finance should at last have the yard-stick of science applied to its rule of thumb ; and that its ultimate mysteries should be analysed and the body

of its doubtful doctrine dissected by a trained investigator conversant with the science of mathematics. For Mr. Douglas has X-rayed the moribund money system, placed its morbid growths in his new test tube, drained off all the watery economic stuff that had accumulated since 1775, applied the acid test to the resultant, and thus precipitated all financial humbug to the bottom for ever. He has, moreover, reduced his scientific analysis to a formula that even a Bank manager may understand if you give him time.

As the machine-wreckers of the Victorian Age in many cases smashed up their iron competitors, so the high financiers have had their big guns of the Press desperately gutter-sniping at the Douglas theorem and its supporters for some years. The orientation of high finance towards all the post-war economic theorists cannot be better illustrated than by remarking that the editors of every daily newspaper, weekly and monthly review of consequence, will regularly publish innocuous articles over the names of the orthodox economists; but they will not even print the name of

Douglas if they can avoid it. This Narcissian coldness is "significant of much," as Carlyle would express it. Yet the New Economics, based on the Douglas analysis, is still standing as four-square as the Great Pyramid. The attempt to dismiss, with affected haughtiness, the exponents of credit reform as "currency cranks" may be a clever way of climbing off one horn of the financial dilemma. But the other horn—the famous Douglas theorem—still remains jauntily elevated. While financial policy may kill an individual or decimate a nation, it cannot even flick the sheen off the wing of a creative idea, though it may postpone its actualization.

The age-worn axioms of the money system have been challenged successfully by Mr. Douglas, who, like his famous clansman, has already been bold enough to "bell the cat" by fastening his damning analysis round the neck of high finance. The tinkling of the bell is the forerunner to that general clanging from all the campanili in Jewry and Christendom which will ring out the Old and ring in the New Economics one fine day.

Since the present chapter treats of dogma and axiom it may be fitting to add another to the bonfire—that the Douglas challenge of the axioms of high finance are as conclusive as Einstein's are said to be in his own sphere of science. For the continuance of the existing private control of public credit in the hands of international finance will as little maintain the financial stability of modern civilization as would the restoration of a fifth leg achieve the physical stability of a dead donkey.

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CHAPTER TEN

“Arithmetic is an excellent touchstone to try the amplifications of passion and rhetoric.”

(EDWARD GIBBON)

PARTISAN politicians of all shades of opinion will have asked themselves long before this page is reached—why all this tiresome economic stuff in a book apparently dealing with the Renaissance of Scotland? The answer to this important question is that, without a complete reorganization of credit control along the lines of the Douglas analysis, the present writer believes there is small hope of trade revival for the Scottish people whether the administration be at Westminster^{*} or at Edinburgh. Merely to re-establish the parliament in Scotland, but to leave the power to issue credit in control of the Bank of England, is but to quibble with the meaning of self-government. Any Westminster parliament, no matter what

party forms the administration there, is to-day governed by the Bank of England. Despite the "safest" working majority over all other parties, any "government" is only in political office, never in financial power. The "hidden hand" behind any democratically elected administration is always the privately elected government personified in High Finance.

Anticipating the trend of the immediate future, High Finance has been busy since the end of the late war in further strengthening its shackles on Scottish banking. Already four of the eight banking companies in Scotlandshire have been affiliated to the English "Big Five." Negotiations are doubtless now proceeding with the object of sweeping the remainder into the net of London. We have already seen the power of the Treasury to issue notes of the two smallest denominations delegated to the sacrosanct Bank of England, and the head of the King dispensed with on the new notes. The mechanism for enabling this disgraceful capitulation was passed by a powerless parliament without a murmur of dissent from any Party—and during

the régime of a Tory "Government" too ! The ultimate phase of this banking development is not difficult to foretell. It will result in the total suppression of the note-issuing powers of all the Scottish Banks. With the control of the issue of "British paper currency" and credit concentrated in the Bank of England, it would be simply ironical for Scots to chatter about self-government even with a parliament in Edinburgh.

What the inexorable process of trustification and amalgamation will ultimately mean for the Scottish people may be gauged by what has already taken place. The spirit of the time in which we live has prompted the co-ordination of railway management—with the scales weighted heavily in favour of England, as every intelligent Scot is already aware. It is the Time-Spirit which has evolved the drug trusts at the expense of the "individualist" one-man businesses ; as also the London control by the drapery pools of sundry old-established firms in the chief Scottish cities. Engineering, textiles, electric-power generation, ship-building,

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newspaper production, building contracting, and so on have felt the same necessity to seek financial support at the price of London control. The private trader is gradually being ousted—not by Socialist legislation—but by the Time-Spirit itself, acting under Tory and Liberal auspices and with Socialist consent.

The plight of Scotlandshire in relation to England is well known to Scotsmen, though a brief summary of the winter of our discontent may be not amiss at this point. Her unemployment is 50 per cent. greater than in England ; and her housing conditions are without question worse than in almost any other civilized European country. Her native population is at last declining—not because of a decadent virility, but through the general decay of industry and agriculture, the rise of deer-forestry, and the consequent increase in emigration. The higher ratio of taxation *per capita* of the population, coupled with a lower ratio of revenue expenditure within her boundaries, is a grievance that seems perpetual ; for the late Lord Rosebery, speaking of comparative taxation, once

declared that "Scotland is the milch-cow of England." Yet John Bull's cow does not even turn in her stall, but goes on patiently turning the English Empire into a land flowing with milk under the honeyed words of political platitudes.

The English bailiffs are now in possession of Scotlandshire, and are busy taking over the goodwill and flitting her industries across the Border. The significant trend southward of Scottish (not to mention English) industry has already hit the North hard; and the utter economic barrenness of the three hen parties at Westminster can only result in a further accentuation of the physical distress so rampant beyond the Cheviots. The "Irish invasion" on the Clyde, and the "Polish invasion" of the coalfields are portentous phases of the economic policy which necessitates reduced wages in an effort to cheapen the cost of production. The recent spectacle of Scottish leaders of religion seeking the aid of the Westminster Parliament in an effort to cope with the alleged invasion of Irish workers, was humorously pathetic when one remembers that Scotsmen

themselves have invaded Ireland and every country under the sun because there is no adequate outlet for their energies in their own Anglicized country. The fact that immigration into other white countries is now being regulated and rationed means that fewer Scottish emigrants will be able to go abroad, though no doubt our benevolent exponents of internationalism will do their best to overcome this impediment in a temporary way as usual.

Few Scots, whether ecclesiast or layman, raise any objections to the foreign invasion of pleasure-seekers every holiday season. There may be people of Scottish blood who would prefer their country to be developed as a second Switzerland. What does it matter to a truly internationalized Scot if the Border woollen industry ultimately finds its home in Yorkshire, so long as the Bradford manufacturers continue to take their pleasures sadly on our grouse moors? Why cry over spilt milk if the Dundee jute trade vanishes to Calcutta, so long as Indian territorial and industrial princes condescend to patronize our deer forests once a year? Does not the most delightful

feeling of internationalism stir the breast of a true Scot when he reads of a humble Christian member of the Scottish peerage marrying into the exalted Hebrew aristocracy? What though the directorate of the Bank of England consists partly of hyphenated English from the U.S.A. and Germany, so long as we have Anglicized Scots as heads of several of its departments? What does it matter if the spare parts of the English Empire lying about all over the world have attained self-government on federal lines, so long as our countrymen are paid "decent" wages to run the machine? Even the Jewish people are at last established as a nation in Palestine; Egypt is well on the way to complete autonomy; and the Time-Spirit is working in favour of India. Mushroom republics have sprung up in Europe since the war, as they rose in South America during the last century. Indeed, there is no civilized people on our planet that has not been jogged into national consciousness by the Scots, who are mostly unconscious that they themselves are a subject race.

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Can a Scot express his patriotism only by helping other lame nations over stiles? Can he feel love for his country only when he has emigrated to an alien shore? Can he wax eloquent only over what his ancestors have done for others; and not about what he may do for himself and for the future of his own native land? Shall he for ever remain thirled to English politicians, rather than employ his national gift for economics through his own Parliament? Cannot he realize that even an English administration is systematically stymied by the Bank of England in any financial measure touching the future welfare of the Scots? Is he impotent to discard the Westminster spectacles sighted for English vision in favour of the Douglas microscope more suited to Scottish sight? Must the ready ability of the Scots to do the bidding of their English masters continue to embody the highest significance of Scottish character? Has their inferiority complex transmogrified them into an expectant band of Micawberists waiting for something to turn up from the Hub of the Universe? Are they not yet aware that

American axle-grease is all that keeps that Hub from over-heating financially? Cannot they understand that their country is merely the tyre of the wheel—most remote from the Hub, and consequently bearing the greatest friction either in peace or in war? Is the Scot too obtuse to realize that he himself is the most faithful piece of automatic machinery ever invented by the English?

The least intelligent must have observed the gradual process of Americanization even of England since the Armistice. Not only is the starred and striped lingo of the efficiency-experts being grafted upon the mother-tongue, but American financial control is already openly permeating English industry. While England is officially back to the Gold Standard, it is more accurate to say that the whole of Europe is on a dollar-standard; for the debtor nations of the Old World must be subservient to the great creditor nation in the New World. This alien domination by International Finance of the English political machine, which in turn dominates Scotlandshire, may be likened to a double-

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barrelled gun pointing at the heart of a hoodwinked people. It will avail her naught merely to put up the hands and impotently say, "Kamerad!"—for the future of Scotlandshire will be given not even momentary consideration by any foreign financial government in New York operating through any native political administration in London. Why should foreigners be expected to consider the future of a tiny northern English province, if Scotsmen have not the will to exert themselves in the interest of their own self-government? Why must the Scottish people remain gratefully satisfied to exist on the crumbs that fall from the banqueting table at Westminster, after England has eaten the charitable American loaf?

The future of England itself is problematical in the face of the stern industrial competition she is now experiencing from other manufacturing nations—a competition which must be accentuated with the passing of time. That she cannot afford to treat North Britain in any way but as an English county is not England's fault, though the Scottish organism is being

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transformed daily into an Anglicized mechanism. Until the articulate voice of a united Scotland is heard in the land of our fathers, England has other fish to fry without bothering her weary head too much about the declining state of the Scottish fishing industry, for instance.

That there is something rotten in the state of Scotlandshire, even the most indifferent Anglicized, colonialized, or hyphenated Scot must admit. If the rot be not arrested within the current decade by Scots everywhere, then they must for ever lapse into a servile caste of book-keepers and policemen and soldiers for the predominant partner, guarding the frontiers of the far-flung English Empire while mouthing well-worn Scottish maxims but handling well-kept Maxim guns.

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

“There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.”
(SHAKESPEARE)

THAT it is the financial system which prevents modern society from reaping the full potential benefits from scientific discovery is a conclusion that can hardly now be doubted. Perhaps the following declaration may help to remove any hesitation that may remain in the minds of those still on the triply-orthodox political plane. The Federal Reserve Board of New York—the mouthpiece of American banking interests—announced some years ago, in connection with the several overtures for war-debt reduction that had been made, that “No proposals of any sort should be entertained until far-reaching guarantees

of fiscal reform have been secured from the countries needing aid."

Money is said to talk ; but in that clear pronouncement it is shouting at the top of its voice ; and that voice is the voice of International Finance which controls credit primarily for its own profit, with only secondary thought for the political and industrial issues at stake in debtor countries. In face of such definite dictation by High Finance to the elected representatives in European parliaments, it is surely time the electorate realized that *any* parliament is merely an administration obeying the private orders of the real Financial Government behind the scenes. With Scottish politicians standing patiently at the end of the Westminster parliamentary food queue, what hope is there for Scottish industry until England is fed ? Reduced dividends, no dividends whatever, bankruptcies, reconstructions, widespread unemployment and doles, have been the staple production of the wonderful money system during the last decade. Yet meanwhile *every banking concern in the country has maintained its high rate of dividends.*

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Such a result is the only logical outcome of a system discredited by the Douglas analysis exactly ten years ago.

One of the universally accepted characteristics of the Scottish people is said to be their thriftiness. The genial sallies on the Scot's attitude to bawbees, and the thin jokes about his banging saxpences, are part of the currency of intercourse among English-speaking folk. This apparently superficial belief may have more relation to facts than have many other familiar fictions based on racial misunderstandings. It may be that the Scottish contribution to social evolution during the industrial era since the Union of the Parliaments has always best been expressed in terms of economics. It may be also partly the explanation why Scotland before 1707 had not developed politically so far as England.

The disastrous Union of 1707 occurred at a period when Scotland appeared to be developing into a modern European State. Her subsequent sinking into a subordinate position seems now to threaten the extinction or absorption of a racial mind-cast

that is generally admitted to have benefited the world, even though it has been in the rôle of a subject people.

Before the Union, William Paterson was the means of founding the Bank of England—strange irony! After the Union another Scot, Adam Smith, was the first to enunciate the general principles underlying Political Economy. Still another, Henry Duncan, was the founder of the first Savings Bank. To-day, the banks throughout the English-speaking world are manned by battalions of Scots, what time their native country is dwindling industrially, numerically, and culturally.

The advent of Major Douglas at this precise moment in history is a significant portent economically for Scotland as it is for the whole world. For now arises the question whether the destiny of Scottish genius may be to drain the economic morass in which the first-class nations of civilization are pathetically floundering. It may be that the Scottish people shall be the first to express in terms of economic action that celebrated equation first enunciated by her latest son of economic genius.

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Certainly no people has earned a better right to *change the cock* than have the Scots, who were the inventors of the precious Rooster System of Central Banking. The Old Lady of Finance cannot much longer be permitted to carry on laboriously threading her primitive needle as if ignorant that the Douglas sewing-machine is now on the market.

Wood has given way to iron, and then to steel ships. The hand-loom has been superseded by the power loom. Tallow gave place to oil, to gas, to electric light. The pedal succumbed to the water-wheel, then to steam, next to gas, later to oil, then to the dynamo, and now petrol. The sail was reefed and replaced by the funnel. The post-chaise was withdrawn to make room for the railway. The pack-horse disappeared before the family-chariot ; and the motor-car now makes domestic transport perilously pleasant. The spade was discarded for the horse-plough ; that for the tractor ; and the self-binder killed the reaping-machine and the sickle. In short, mechanical contrivances may come and go through the urge of social evolution ; but

the Banking mechanism goes on for ever in its time-worn ruts.

Finance has filled in the ruts here and there during the last century, if only to ensure that the productive machine did not come to grief permanently. But why the blame for the cycle of slumps should be fathered on the obviously progressive productive system is a question which no mere politician will ever satisfactorily explain to a mesmerized electorate.

For it is always the mechanism of distribution—viz., the Banking System—which fails to deliver the goods readily forthcoming from the mechanism of production.

On the one hand we have industry adapting to its use every available scientific discovery ; adjusting itself to the necessity of mass-production ; and concentrating on the invention of automatic machinery (with its corollary, more unemployment of man-power). On the other hand, we have finance still vainly endeavouring to use the antiquated method of distribution, which worked more or less satisfactorily in the primitive age of handicrafts and

limited foreign competition, but which cannot possibly function adequately in this electro-mechanical age of furious "internationalism."

To give the international financiers their due, it is only rational to assume that they are intelligent enough to know that the Time-Spirit is working against a continuance of their hallowed money system. But human nature being what it is, they will obviously strive to retain their control of credit as long as Rip van Winkle remains asleep.

The universal chatter about Internationalism, Disarmament, Imperialism, League of Nations, Hague Conferences, Rationalization, Nationalization, Freemasonic Brotherhood, Rotarian and other sob stuff, is merely Rip van Winkle talking in his sleep of the centuries. His case is entirely pathological; and until he awakes from the narcotics administered by his political nurses from the prescription of his financial leeches, his case is almost past praying for. It is sheer sophistry to pretend to believe that automatic machinery and high-speed production may be increased, and at the

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same time that unemployment can be reduced even to "normal" proportions—within the orbit of orthodox finance, and without international catastrophe.

The future is to the people enlightened enough to recognize that the true test of scientific achievement is that it shall *create unemployment* by enabling society to enjoy the benefits derivable from labour-saving appliances and by giving it more leisure to pursue the essentials of culture, through a more scientific money system.

But the *Cock must be changed* before he crows the third time !

With a parliament re-established in Edinburgh, and the Douglas economics assimilated and expressed in practical form on its native heath, Scotland would once more take her place culturally in the Western World. For the world would be the poorer were the Scottish people to become completely Anglicized, as must inevitably be the case if self-government is not soon achieved by them. As the centre of a swarm of bees is its queen, so an Edinburgh parliament would be the nucleus round which would develop in all its

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cultural forms the national Scottish genius that is not yet dead but only dormant.

The spiritual heritage of the Scots cannot be justifiably withheld by the Westminster trustees who have administered the estate during the twenty-one decades of the minority of their client. The majority festivities must be celebrated in the usual way—by making the Scottish people responsible for their own conduct. There is no longer need for them to go cap in hand to an English parliament, for they have now grown up. When an Edinburgh parliament is at last achieved, then old Schiehallion himself will doff his cloud-cap in honour of the coming-of-age of a vigorous nation.

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CHAPTER TWELVE

“There is some soul of goodness in things evil,
Would men observingly distil it out.”

(SHAKESPEARE)

THE thesis of this book is an attempt to show that Scotlandshire is now at the cross-roads. If she inadvertently take the wrong turning, then her destiny must be ultimate effacement as a distinct people, suppression of her cultural significance, and continuance henceforward as the English province she now is. That there is still time to retrieve her lost autonomy before the English bugle blows calling Scottish patriots to the next world-conflict is a conclusion that must be left on the lap of the gods. That regeneration must come from the Scottish people themselves is axiomatic, for England would be foolish voluntarily to offer something for which her northern subjects may not be

ready. United action must be swift, however, because the pressure of unemployment is daily becoming more menacing to almost every parliament throughout the world. The most pacifically minded politicians would be powerless to restrain the dogs of war if a patriotic scapegoat were turned loose amongst them in the wilderness of industrial competition.

Cut-and-dried schemes of social reconstruction make their appeal mainly to the politically minded of the orthodox parties ; and the " reformer " who cannot table a plan on paper which the least common denominator at the polling-booths can comprehend is instinctively suspect. It must always remain impossible for say a mathematician to explain the simplest theorem to a person whose knowledge even of arithmetic is elementary. How exceedingly difficult, therefore, must it be to discuss the new economics with one who does not realize how disastrously the old economics work within the existing financial system ?

It would be out of place here to expound at large the new economics based on the

Douglas analysis. Any attempt to reduce it to tabloid form for popular consumption would be presumptive; for the Douglas credit-reform proposals are available in his several books for those having the will to investigate their epoch-making nature. But perhaps the foregoing Cock and John Bull story may at least indicate how a puzzled Scot must look for the spider at the centre of the political web. A Labour member once told the present writer that the average busy M.P. had no time to study properly any difficult economic subjects—most M.P.'s delegating such tedious work to their party's professional economists. Thus Socialists waddle after Mr. Webb and follow Mr. Hobson's choice; Liberals go to the John Stuart Mill (Mr. Keynes is the present lessee) for their economic grist; while the Tories still consult the oracle in Adam Smith's tomb of which Mr. Cox (or is it Mr. Box?) is the present curator.

Let Scottish electors who have awakened from their partisan sleep submerge their political differences for the present. Let them be neither Conservative nor Liberal,

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Socialist nor Communist. Let them work for the Macaulayan brave days of old when :

“ None was for a party,
And all were for the State.”

Let them deny the continuation of parliamentary union with England ; and affirm their unity for Scottish self-government. Let them retrace their steps along the alluring side-tracks represented by single-tax, nationalization, small holdings, alien immigration, native emigration, afforestation, rationalization, Switzerlandization, and so on. Let all such personal pets remain in their hutches until the main issue is determined. Let even the Douglas theorem remain in the offing for the time being.

Since political action is the constitutional method of attaining a national objective, let the electorate support parliamentary candidates who stand for Scottish self-government in opposition to Westminster administration. Let each successful Scottish Nationalist M.P. deliberately refrain from entering the Hen Roost in London, since attendance there

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is conditional upon an oath which few Scottish Nationalists could wish to swear, except profanely.

With the full quota of seventy-four duly-elected Nationalist members for the constituencies into which Scotlandshire is now parcelled (or even with a decided majority) the Scottish people then would be in a position to request from England that measure of self-government which many less-advanced peoples already possess. Scotland's legal right to autonomy on Federal lines may be established without the shedding of a single drop of blood, if tackled in the right spirit of "dourness." Her moral right to that which has already been granted to Canada and the rest of the English Colonies, could not be questioned for long, with the eyes of the civilized world looking on. With the prospect of another world-war facing England she may be ready to meet the expressed desire of the sister-nation if only to ensure Scottish support during the coming conflict. For England is surely not so Bourbonesque as to have learnt nothing and forgotten nothing through her experience with Ireland ?

It cannot be too clearly comprehended that it would be much to the spiritual advantage of England if the Scots were a self-governing people. For England cannot afford to wound her own national honour by permitting the slow annihilation of the Scots as a separate nation. Just as the Scottish genius has been invaluable to England in the past in building up the Empire, so will it be equally necessary in the future in maintaining it. But only under self-government can any people—and not only the Scots—sustain its own national integrity in the cosmic order. Such a measure would be in accord with the modern political development of a progressive Empire—the voluntary establishment of self-governing units federated to the Mother Country. It is, for instance, the avowed object of England to promote self-government in India by a policy of “gradualness.” Surely it cannot be advocated honestly that a policy which is possible for India and for all other members of the Empire must be inapplicable to the Scots whose ancestors took part in achieving that Empire?

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When the "concession" of self-government is at last an accomplished fact, the Renaissance of Scotland shall have begun indeed. Then may a liberated people exercise their wisdom by aligning themselves in any way that their cultural and political inclinations may suggest. Thereafter shall Scottish problems be handled by Scottish M.P.'s for Scottish interests; just as English affairs are dealt with by the English primarily in the interests of England. Better that Scottish affairs be mismanaged by Scotsmen in Edinburgh, than well-administered by Englishmen at Westminster. Better still if Scots folk realize that a fellow-countryman has discovered the missing key to the economic crossword puzzle which has baffled the politicians for ages. Best of all if unitedly they have the will to declare: Forward, brave heart, Scotland will follow Douglas or die of the economic disease now epidemic in the world at large!

The faulty financial prop under modern society cannot much longer sustain the weight of scientific production. The death-watch beetle is busy boring the

prop to inevitable destruction. If the new prop which Douglas has provided be not voluntarily employed, then the next world war must wipe out the old prop as well as its crumbling superstructure.

Scotsmen, awake ! You have nothing to lose but your English chains, glittering though they be with Britannia metal polish. If you do not soon arise from your Rip van Winkle sleep, and achieve political independence, there is only one destiny awaiting you. You must order the tombstone of Scottish Freedom. Desecrate not the Field of Bannockburn with this abomination ; but add the missing spray to the laurel-wreath of England by making Cul-loden the place of sepulture. When the English Premier has unveiled this monstrous monument to a people's self-betrayal, the assembled multitude of Anglicized mercenaries would read the appropriate epitaph :

SACRED TO THE MEMORY
OF
THE REMAINS
OF
SCOTTISH CULTURE AND
FREEDOM

“For the glory of Scotland has
departed.” (*Hosea x. 5.*)

R.I.P.

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CHAPTER THIRTEEN

EPILOGUE

FRIENDS, Scotsmen, countrymen,
lend me your ears !

Ye landed proprietors !—Is the glamour of English institutions which so enthralled your ancestors some two to three centuries ago, still blinding you to the degradation of our Anglicized country ?

Ye bonnet-lairds who “ did well ” out of the war, and purchased your holdings !—Have you found it better to be a squire in the over-drafty hands of a Bank, than to be a tenant under a considerate landlord as before ?

Ye small-holders gulled by political promises !—Have you learnt that a declining population means a decline in your own future prospects ?

Ye wool-growers of the mountains and

the dales !—Are your wits so busy wool-gathering that you are unprepared for the discovery of a substitute for your product, such as already has been found for silk ?

Ye farmers by the thousand !—Cannot you realise that an absentee-parliament is as unsatisfactory as an absentee-landlord ?

Ye hynes and orra-men by the ten thousand !—Take no more political arles from your Westminster masters, but pledge yourselves in earnest for an Edinburgh government.

Ye ploughmen of the lea-rigs !—Let your feering poles be directed to Edinburgh at the next election, and not across the Border.

Ye shepherds of the myriad flocks !—Isn't it time to disperse the out-by drove at Westminster in favour of an in-by hirsell at home ?

Ye graziers on the hills and ye meat-vendors at Smithfield !—To your muttons on behalf of a home-bred Diet on the Forth, in preference to the frozen carcasses in the cold-storage on the Thames !

Ye horticulturists of the straths !—Is it necessary any longer to eat the leek and

the Westminster sour grapes, even though the cultivation of the English rose may be more profitable than the growing of Scotch thistles ?

Ye fruit-growers of “ The Garden of the North ” !—Are your orders from England so lucrative that you prefer to obey them rather than to taste the “ forbidden fruit ” of National Independence ?

Ye poultry-breeders and egg-experts !—Is it consistent with Scottish canniness to permit our political hen-roosts to be robbed by strangers ?

Ye whisky-distillers of Speyside !—When will you learn that Westminster politics for Scotland is as deadly as “ Old Joe ” himself ?

Ye beer-brewers of the Lothians and the Clyde !—Why not usher in a home-brewed parliament in place of the English small-beer ; and refuse to be treated any longer as a younger brother and as a mere tenant of your own patrimony ?

Ye tweed-makers of the Border !—Are you content to let English shoddy politics oust Scotland’s interests, as their shoddy-cloth is ousting your own staple trade ?

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Ye jute merchants and workers of Angus!—Be patient with Westminster until your industry has been internationalized in Calcutta; then you may emigrate to Canada and join the Caledonian Societies there.

Ye ship-builders of the Clyde and the Dee!—Will you not help to tow into Scottish waters the good ship, “Independence,” now languishing in the dry-dock on the Thames?

Ye railwaymen of the English-controlled permanent ways!—Why not mend your political ways permanently by refusing to let England cramp your country with the schemes of a doubtful Thomas?

Ye handicapped colliers competing against “Reparations” coal!—Isn’t it time you made some reparation to yourselves by cooking the Welsh-rabbits now on toast at Westminster, and then hewing out Scottish Independence?

Ye architects and surveyors!—Is it better business to be designing a “movie” theatre for an English Trust, than to be surveying the destiny of Scotland if she be left in the power of the “talkie” at Westminster?

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Ye building-contractors and operatives !
—Isn't the political weather suitable for
laying the foundations of National In-
dependence to a Scottish specification ?

Ye plumbers of the pathetic perennial
“ Punch ” pasquinade !—Cease tinkering
with the hopelessly burst political pipes in
the dirty-linen laundry at St. Stephen's,
and get busy on a new installation near
St. Giles' !

Ye road-surveyors and road-menders
Macadamizing the highways and Telford-
ing the rivers for the Scottish legions
southward bent !—Are you aware that the
roads to England, as well as to Hell, are
paved with good intentions ?

Ye schoolmasters and mistresses !—Are
you educated so much beyond your intel-
ligence that you cannot see your way out
of the Whitehall political wilderness ?

Ye university-students and scholars
everywhere !—Do not let your political
grandmothers teach you how to suck the
Westminster eggs, which might be found
useful arguments at the next election !

Ye newly fledged brood of expectant
M.A.'s trudging the Johnsonian highway

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to the South!—Pause in your steps to consider whether England will need your services much longer in this age of the mechanization of clerical work.

Ye newspaper-men throughout the planet!—Do you intend always to continue writing journalistic English seasoned with Scots humour to the commands of a Welsh editor employed by a Gentile syndicate acting on behalf of Jewish-American financial interests?

Ye bank-agents and clerks who man the Ship of Finance across the Goodwin Sands of Industry!—Scotland has need of you to balance the books in her new epoch, as Scotlandshire requires your help under the old dispensation.

Ye accountants and auditors!—Is your dependence on past favours upon English employment more to you than the Independence of your country?

Ye insurance-agents and officials!—What about an all-in Policy to cover the risks of complete ruin to Scottish trade if Westminster denomination is not soon abandoned?

Ye stock-jobbers and brokers on

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'Change !—Why not take a hand in the job of changing the basis of Government of your country before her national character drops many points lower ?

Ye legal luminaries and lesser soliciting stars !—Wouldn't it be legal justice to your national client if you advocated the dissolution of the Union on the grounds of desertion by the dominant partner ?

Ye shop-assistants and salesmen !—Is not an Edinburgh parliament a greater counter-attraction than the window-dressing competition at St. Stephen's ?

Ye battalions in Col. Bogey's regiment !—Are you willing to let your country's future be stymied by your royal and ancient masters at Westminster ?

Ye football fanatics of the towns !—Is it nothing to you that England has beaten Scotland in the political scrum for 222 years.

Ye cricket-enthusiasts of the counties !—Are not you aware that for more than two centuries you have never been allowed to play political cricket at home, but always "away" on the queered pitch at Westminster ?

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Ye footling spotters of all the losers !—
Why not put your vote on a rank outsider
of the National Party at next election,
instead of your bob on an also-ran for the
Grand National at Aintree ?

Ye little-game hunters of the week-ends !
—Are you as deadly with a No. 12 choke-
bore on pheasants as the big vote-hunters
at St. Stephen's are on emigrating Scottish
peasants ?

Ye followers of the chase !—When will
you begin hunting the financial foxes on
the Poultry Farm by the Thames ?

Ye gamekeepers and gillies of the glens
and the forests !—Are you quite satisfied to
go on loading guns for alien “ Big Guns ”
who are steadily displacing Scottish wives
and weans with deer ?

Ye Highland and Lowland brigades of
military mercenaries !—Hats off to those
Western islanders who instinctively re-
jected the sunlight-soapy advances of an
Anglicizing Leverhulme !

Ye diamond-diggers of the Rand !—Has
the glitter of precious stones dimmed your
eyes to the beauty of the Scottish Stone of
Destiny still in English custody ?

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Ye gold-seekers of Kalgurli and Kirkland Lake !—Do not your crushing-operations remind you that national character is being crushed out of your compatriots by the Westminster vote-extracting machinery ?

Ye rubber-planters of Malaysia !—Does the commodity you produce insulate you from thinking of the pure latex of the Scottish character that is being adulterated by Anglicization ?

Ye tea-growers of China and Ceylon !—Are you so narcotized by “the cup that cheers” that you are unaware of the political Cup of Tantalus that has been held to the parched lips of Scottish electorates for ages ?

Ye cotton-growers of the Soudan !—Are not the depredations of the boll-weevil the exact counterpart of those of the English poll-weevil on the future of your native land ?

Ye vineyard cultivators of Australia and Africa !—Is the Scottish blood in your veins less precious than the goods you sell in your vats ?

Ye civil-engineers of the P.W.D. in the East !—Will you help to build the political

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bridge between London and Edinburgh, with Independence as the keystone ?

Ye electrical engineers cabling the world !
—Your next contract should be to short-circuit the current from the South to the North, and to instal some live wire in Edinburgh.

Ye mining-engineers surveying the ends of the earth !—Does not your theodolitic fore-sight give you the vision that the cultural zenith of Scotland must have its datum in her own capital ?

Ye de-nationalized cogs in the Anglo-Indian administrative machine !—Are you less concerned with Scotland's future than with Asia's ?

Ye Jacks-of-all-Trades from Orcadia to Oyster Bay !—Pause for a moment to consider the future destiny of your country under English domination and permeation.

Ye pioneers in the nooks and crannies of the known and the unknown world !—Hold your hand temporarily from painting the map Imperial red, and ponder whether your seeking financial independence abroad is at the cost of sacrificing National Independence for ever to England.

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Ye men and women of Scottish blood everywhere!—Have we all been unconsciously admitting the truth of the following quatrain by the Persian poet?—

“ Indeed the Idols I have loved so long
Have done my Credit in Men’s Eye much wrong ;
Have drown’d my Honour in a shallow Cup,
And sold my Reputation for a Song.”

Ye men and women of English blood everywhere!—Is it consistent with your alleged love of fair play that you should use politically loaded dice against the Sister Kingdom to all eternity?

Ye “sleekit, cawrin’, tim’rous” cratur
who still say : “I quite agree with you,
BUT . . . !”—Get out of the way !

“ Wha sae base as be a slave ?
Let him turn and flee ! ”

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